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AND
CHIRKLAND

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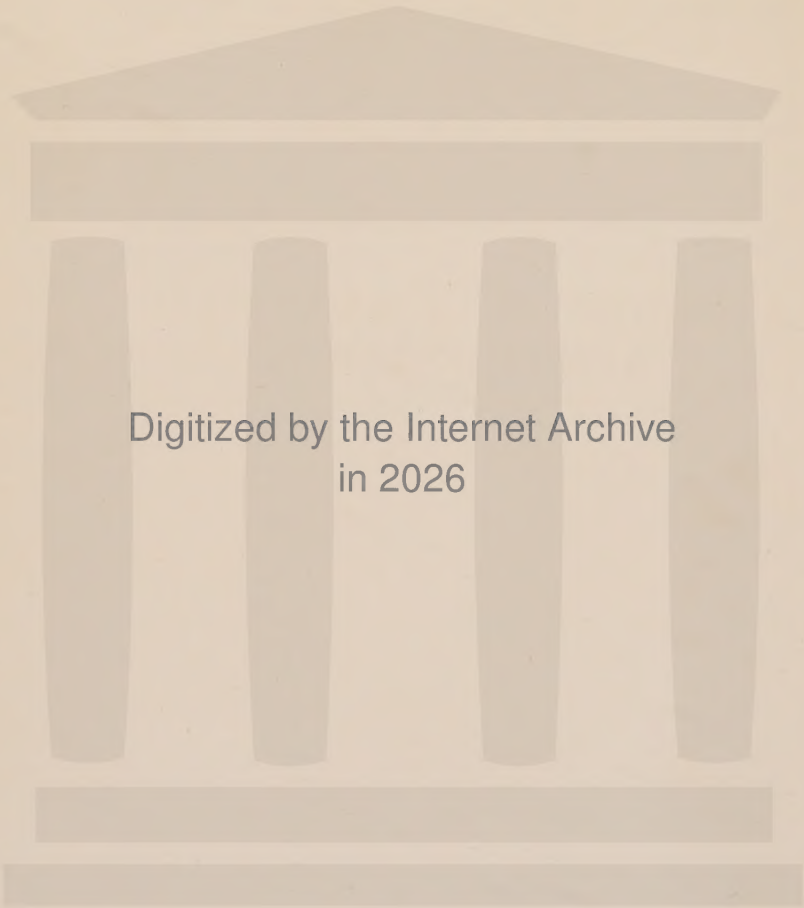
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A HISTORY OF CHIRK CASTLE AND CHIRKLAND

GENERAL SIR THOMAS MYDDELTON

From a print in the British Museum

A HISTORY OF
CHIRK CASTLE
AND
CHIRKLAND

WITH A CHAPTER ON OFFA'S DYKE

BY

MARGARET MAHLER

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PREFACE

THE number of existing manuscripts of an early date, bearing on the general history of Chirkland, is a comparatively small one. The British Museum yields very little material. It is from the State Papers in the Record Office, and from one or two private collections, that the greater part of the manuscript authorities quoted in this book are taken. Of the Record Office MSS. relating to the lordship of Chirkland, the Estate Accounts and Surveys furnish the most valuable material, and in this department the supply is a comparatively large one. The inclusion of these accounts in the text has necessarily broken the consecutive history of Chirkland at many points. But it has seemed to me that if the book is to be of any use to a serious student, here and there, it must include some details taken from contemporary sources, on which such a student can base his own conclusions. History, whether dealing with great or small themes, is worthless if it fails to present any picture of the life of the past. Such a picture is often more vividly called up by some detail regarding an ancient tax or a workman's wages, than by many chapters of abstract conclusions. For the purpose of history it may seem unimportant that we should know what sum of money was paid in

1329 to "Nicholas the Forester," for the board and lodging of the "lord's wolf-hound and her eight puppies." But who will deny that this delightful entry, which has somehow safely weathered six centuries, brings us nearer to the life of the time than many a learned essay?

The matter contained in the extracts from Chancery Inquisitions, Patent Rolls, and Close Rolls may seem at first sight to consist of dry bones, but a closer study of them brings to light a store of curious and interesting facts regarding the life of the people. At one moment the reader is appalled at the weight of taxes and tolls under which they laboured, and at the next he is startled by their possession of rights and privileges which are now completely lost.

I am greatly indebted to the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Crawshay Puleston, late of Worthenbury Manor, for access to the unpublished Puleston Manuscripts, from which I have obtained some valuable material bearing upon Chirk. The most important manuscript from this source is Henry VII's Charter to Chirkland—a document of great interest from several points of view. For the interpretation of most of the old Welsh taxes, contained in this and other MSS. quoted in this book, I am much indebted to Mr. A. N. Palmer of Wrexham, whose special knowledge in this department of research is known to all students of the subject.

My grateful acknowledgements are due to Professor J. E. Lloyd for information on various points; and to

Mr. W. M. Myddelton of St. Albans, for his very kind permission to quote from his privately printed book, "Chirk Castle Accounts." The extracts from this last source have furnished a picture of life at Chirk Castle in the seventeenth century which could not have been obtained elsewhere.

I am indebted to Mr. Edward Owen, Secretary to the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouth, for kindly visiting the mound in Chirk village, at my request, and giving me his opinion that it is the site of a Norman mound-and-bailey castle; to Dr. and Mrs. Lloyd, for giving him every facility for examining the mound; and to Mrs. E. Armitage for drawing my attention to it in the first instance, and for information regarding early Norman castles. I wish also to thank Professor Owen M. Edwards for advice on early Welsh authorities; the Rev. T. Shankland, of the Welsh Library of Bangor University College, for kindly looking up several doubtful points for me; Mr. W. H. Banks for permission to reproduce a drawing from "The Duke of Beaufort's Progress through Wales"; and Mr. A. T. Davies, of the Board of Education, for the suggestion that the history of the Ceiriog valley should be written.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation of Miss H. F. Fenwick's excellent work in the Index.

PENISA'R GLYN
BRON-Y-GARTH
January 1912.

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A HISTORY OF CHIRK CASTLE AND CHIRKLAND

INTRODUCTORY

THE history of border districts is proverbially a stirring one. Whether handed down in all the glories of *The Ballad of Chevy Chase*, or in the brief phrases of an old chronicle, it carries with it those elements of romance inseparable from the clash of two races, and the struggle for a "debateable land." Chirkland is no exception to this rule. For so small and thinly populated a district its fortunes have often been, to a surprising degree, in the main stream of national history.

This is mainly attributable to two causes: first, its situation, and second, its possession, at different periods, by certain persons of marked personality. The unconquerable independence of the Welsh people, leading to continual resistance to English rule, gave the line of border castles between the two countries a peculiar importance. Chirk Castle, as commanding two routes between England and Wales—those of the Dee and Ceiriog valleys—must often have been one of the keys of the situation. To its position Chirk owes its connection with Henry II's campaign, and the first and perhaps most dramatic

episode in its story. Owing to its possession by the Mortimers and Arundels, we have charters and documents which give us a glimpse, however regrettably brief, of the position of the freemen of Chirk, and of the still smaller holders of land. From the accounts of the estate, with their lists of taxes and tolls, we see at how many points the poor man was taxed. But we also see that he possessed, in the Middle Ages, rights of grazing and hunting in forests and waste lands, which have now been taken from him.

Some few facts we also possess regarding the wages of skilled artisans in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. We have a picture of the condition of society in the fourteenth century which made it possible for six prominent men of the Chirk district, with their followers, to make a raid upon a neighbour's land at Whittington, and to carry off no less than nine hundred and seventy-three head of cattle, including over two hundred horses. Even as late as the sixteenth century we see how lightly murder was regarded in this border region. Brief glimpses there are, too, into the sport of the valley in olden times, in one of which we find the otter-hounds working the Ceiriog, four centuries and a half ago, as they do to-day.

That Chirk was, at various points in its history, a larger and more important place that it is now, is evident from the records. Allusions to the "Great Hall" in Chirk, in the fifteenth century, and to twelve shops for which no rent is paid because they have fallen into ruins since the previous account, bear witness to the past size and importance of the place. Similar witness is borne by the special charter granted by Henry VII to the inhabitants of Chirk, exempting them from the operation of

that statute of Henry IV which made it illegal for any Welshman to buy land or hold office in any English town.

The little valley has had its full share of stirring incidents. Its surrounding hills have echoed to the tramp of a great marching army, and to the strange battle-cries of Flanders and Anjou. And from the valour of the little body of Welshmen who held that great army at bay, down by the river at Castle Mill, there was coined a new word on the lips of the English, and for years afterwards a "Crogen" was a synonym for a warrior of "desperate courage." The men of Chirk have met Owain Glyndwr on the field of battle, and have helped to turn the scale at Bosworth, and the women have come to their doors to gaze at French prisoners taken at Poictiers or Agincourt.

When occasion arose the tenants and yeomen of the valley have known how to stand up for their common rights against the unjust aggression of those in power. Puritan and Cavalier have contended for the mastery here, and have each in turn held, lost, and regained the Castle.

TRACES OF TWO EARLY CASTLES

OF the history of Chirk before the coming of the Normans we know nothing. When in the reign of Henry I the earliest allusion to a fortress on the Ceiriog occurs, it is to archaeology as much as to any written record that we must go for confirmation of the fact.

In an Anglo-Norman poem,[1] *The History of Fulk Fitz Warine*, a passage occurs of which the following is a translation: "William Peverel conquered by the sword all the land of Morelas as far as the water of Dee, Ellesmere, Maylour (Maelor) and Nanhoudwy. This William made in the White Launde a tower, and called it White Tower; and the town which is about it is still called White Town, in English, Whittington. In Ellesmere he made another tower, and on the water of Keyroc (Ceiriog) another." In this phrase it is probable that we possess the earliest record of the first castle of Chirk.[2]

There exists now in the village, in a private garden, a

[1] Thomas Wright, in editing the poem for the Wharton Club, points out that though the handwriting in the manuscript is of the time of Edward II, the poem is evidently a paraphase of an Anglo-Norman poem, and that in certain places "where the writer seems to have been seized with a fit of idleness," the original Anglo-Norman rhymes have been incorporated in the text without change. The instances quoted are very striking, and quite unmistakable when printed in verse.

[2] It must be clearly understood that this refers to the first castle of Chirk, not to Castle Crogen.

remarkable mound which, in the opinion of experts, points to its having been the site of one of the "motte-and-bailey" (mound and courtyard) type of castle which the Normans were accustomed to in their own country, and which they were in the habit of building in England after the conquest.

According to the archaeologist who has made a special study of the existing remains of these castles,[1] "their great characteristic is the moated hillock, which is a truncated cone, either wholly or partially artificial, or formed by scarping a natural hill, and which is surrounded by a wide ditch. To this is nearly always attached a base court or bailey, which is also ditched round, and encompassed by a bank on the counterscarp which also goes round the ditch of the hillock. The moated hillock carried a timber stockade on the top, which enclosed a wooden house or tower." The Norman name for this kind of moated hillock was "motte." We are told "that the platform was sometimes large enough to contain extensive buildings, sometimes too small to have contained more than a watch-tower."

The Chirk example seems rather to have belonged to

[1] E. S. Armitage, author of *Anglo-Saxon burhs and early Norman Castles* (*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. xxxiv), *An Introduction to English Antiquities, etc.* Mrs. Armitage has visited the Chirk mound, and it is to her that I owe the suggestion as to its possible identity with Peverel's "tower."

At my request Mr. Edward Owen, secretary to the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouth, has visited the mound, and is also of the opinion that it is the site of an Anglo-Norman castle.

The sentences in quotation marks are from one or other of the articles above-mentioned.

this latter class, though the courtyard may have extended for some distance parallel to the river in an easterly direction. The smallness of the space between the base of the hillock and the point where the hill falls sharply away (on the river side) would seem to preclude the possibility of two ditches, but the excellence of the natural defensive position on that side would render them unnecessary at that point. The available space and position suggest that, on this side, the fortification consisted of the central hillock, surrounded by a ditch, a very small courtyard, and an outer defence of palisades where the hill drops sharply to the river. On the east side there would be room for two ditches, and possibly even on the west.

We are told that the court, where large enough, contained stables, kitchens, workshops, etc. "The hillock contained the lord's residence, which was a wooden tower, and served as a citadel and look-out."[1]

The Chirk mound is an instance of the use of a natural hill, which has clearly been banked up artificially on the river side. The hillock in the centre is a perfect example of the "truncated cone" which is characteristic of these fortifications. This is surrounded by a flat area, now a garden. This flat portion seems to point unmistakably to the court or bailey which surrounded the hillock. The angle formed by the mound and the flat portion surrounding it precludes the possibility of the terrace having been cut out of a hill of which the cone was the natural top.

But, it may be asked, even if William Peverel built a "tower" on "the water of Ceiriog" what proof have we

[1] *Early Norman Castles*, E. S. Armitage.

that its possible traces would resemble those found at Chirk? What is the evidence for identifying these hillocks with the remains of early Norman castles? The evidence is collected from many different sources, and is too long for full reproduction here.[1] The following is a brief outline of the main points:

1. The testimony of the Bayeux Tapestry. In it we have "a picture of William's troops after the battle of Hastings, engaged in throwing up a motte at Hastings; and the inscription above the picture says: 'He commands that they dig a castle' ('Jussit ut foderetur castellam')."

The same type of castle may be seen in the Bayeux Tapestry pictures of Bayeux, Rennes, Dol, and Dinant. "In the pictures of the siege of the castle of Dinant, we see not only the motte delineated, but the wooden bretasche on the top; the assailants endeavouring to set fire to it, while the defenders are trying to frustrate the purpose by pushing down the torches as fast as they are applied."

2. In nearly every case where we possess a contemporary record of an Anglo-Norman castle having been

[1] For the full argument, identifying mottes with the sites of Anglo-Norman castles, see *Anglo-Saxon burhs and early Norman Castles* by E. S. Armitage, who has devoted special research to the subject (*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. xxxiv). In this article the older theory that the mounds are of Anglo-Saxon origin is discussed and refuted by a considerable body of evidence. Their early Norman origin is now generally accepted by archaeologists. Further articles on the subject may be found in the *Historical Review*, vol. xix.

The epitome here given of the main points in the evidence is a condensed statement of the first article above-mentioned

built in England we find traces of a motte existing to this day. "With very few exceptions the castles mentioned in Domesday Book still possess their original hillocks and bailey courts."

3. The Anglo-Norman castles were "nearly always found in towns or villages, on the level of the arable country." The platform on which the Chirk hillock is raised answers to this description and is level with the main street of the village.

4. These "mottes" found on the Welsh border cannot be of Welsh origin, as the Welsh at that time made earthworks to contain large numbers.

5. The excavation of a motte at Penworthan produced a Norman spur "of exactly the same type as the one on the effigy of Geoffrey de Mandeville, in the Temple Church."

Passing from the general question of the origin of these mounds to the particular case of Chirk, we find ourselves in possession of a striking piece of evidence. We have seen how the hillock was crowned by a wooden tower. The Norman name for this was "bretasche." In the Pipe Rolls for the year 1213 there is an entry of £5 for a bretasche for the castle of Chirk.[1] The *History of Fulke Fitz Warine* places the building of Peverel's tower "on the water of Ceiriog" in Henry I's reign, *i.e.*, between 1100 and 1135. The Pipe Rolls entry proves that a castle of the mound-and-bailey type was in existence at Chirk in 1213.

Reviewing all the above facts, it cannot be said that we have absolute proof that the mound at Chirk is the

[1] Pipe Roll, 14 John. The Pipe Rolls formed the national account-book of the time.

hillock of Peverel's castle, but we may fairly say that the evidence is strongly in favour of the identification.

The Castle of Crogen.

The greater part of Chirkland's earliest historical tradition gathers round the castle of Crogen. For many centuries all writers have taken for granted that it stood on the site of the present Chirk Castle. Who it was that started this assumption we cannot now know. No evidence exists to support it, and it has survived through the usual process of repetition by each historian of his predecessor's statement.

A piece of evidence of great value, bearing on the question of the site, has recently come to light. In a survey of Chirkland taken in 1391 or 1392, an entry has been discovered[1] in which a sum of money is mentioned in connection with a "castle" in the township of Crogen Iddon.[2] All names and written allusions in which the word "Crogen" appears, are consistent with this new placing of the site, and in some cases even definitely confirm it. For instance, it must have struck investigators as curious that Castle Crogen should have been in the township "Y Waen" (which is where the accepted tradition placed it) and not in one of the townships which preserve the word "Crogen" in their names to the present day.

The place in which Powel, in his "Historie of Cambria," definitely locates the exact site of the castle of Crogen is worth examination. It is now thought by

[1] By Mr. A. N. Palmer of Wrexham, to whom the cause of original research in this part of the border is so greatly indebted. The manuscript is in private hands, and has not yet been published.

[2] This township lies on the south bank of the River Ceiriog, while the township of Y Waen, in which the present Chirk Castle stands, is on the north bank.

some authorities that the absence of this exact location from the oldest account of the battle,[1] and the lateness of Powel's history,[2] render his account valueless. But without attaching any intrinsic weight to his statement it is worth while to examine it, and to ascertain whether local place-names and the inherent probabilities of the situation tend to confirm or to discredit it. Further, it is never wise to ignore a local tradition. Such traditions may, under examination, prove wholly unreliable. But, on the other hand, the newest discoveries of original documents are frequently found to confirm them. A valley such as that of the Ceiriog, where for centuries son will have followed father on the same land, is of all places the most likely to pass on such an oral tradition.

Powel's phrase in describing the battle of Crogen, to which we shall come later, is as follows: "As they would have passed Offa's ditch, at the Castell of Crogen, at which place there was and is at this daie a narrow way through the same ditch, etc." At the spot now called Castle Mill, the boundaries of the old township of Crogen Iddon were Offa's Dyke and the River Ceiriog. These two boundaries meet and form an angle at the point where the gap in the dyke occurs. In the corner thus formed there is an excellent site for a fortress, at the top of a bank where the land falls sharply to the river. The probability of there having been a stronghold here is very great, as the gap in the dyke would specially need defence, on account of its being the passage between England and Wales at this point. A local place-name, already mentioned, affords striking support to this theory of the site. A little group of houses, down by the river,

[1] In the *Brut y Tywysogion*. [2] Published in 1584.

and in the gap of the dyke, is now called Castle Mill. But, tracing the history of the name backwards, we find that in a manuscript of the year 1398[1] it is spoken of as "the mill of Crogen." The old theory of the site of Crogen placed it at a considerable distance from this spot. The site suggested by the latest discovery places it within a stone's throw of the spot now called Castle Mill. The mention, in early manuscripts, of a mill at this point implies a likelihood of there having been a ford somewhere near the spot, in all probability at the place where we now cross the river by Castle Mill Bridge. A castle situated at the top of the steep bank above mentioned, would command the ford, and also the gateway between Wales and England.

The identification of the exact site within the township of Crogen Iddon cannot, of course, be more than speculation, unless further facts are forthcoming. But it is speculation founded on the strong probabilities of the situation, and on our knowledge of the sites usually chosen for border strongholds at the time. When, however, we revert to the main question of the existence of a castle in the township of Crogen Iddon in the fifteenth or sixteenth year of Richard II's reign, we are on the solid ground of fact. Granting that Roger Mortimer built the present Chirk Castle (and the type is clearly Edwardian) soon after he obtained possession of Chirkland, his castle would have been standing for about a hundred years, at the time of the entry relating to the castle in Crogen Iddon township. This surely disposes of the tradition that the present Chirk Castle was on the site of Castle Crogen. Although the exact spot on which

[1] In the Record Office. Quoted in full later.

this latter castle stood can, at present, be matter for speculation only, we now know that such a castle existed, and stood—where we might expect to find it—in one of the townships bearing the same name.

In the *Brut y Tywysogion*, or *Chronicles of the Princes*,[1] we are told that in the year 1202 the territory of Elise, son of Madoc, was taken from him because he tried to prevent Llewelyn ap Yorwerth (Llewelyn the Great) from making war on Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powys; "and ultimately there was given him for maintenance, in charity, the castle of Crogen with seven small townships."

On the evidence which we possess at present it is impossible to say whether the Crogen alluded to here was that in the Ceiriog valley, or the township of Crogen situated in the lordship of Penllyn, which included Bala and its castle.[2] On the one hand we have the fact that Elise was the lord of Penllyn. It seems more probable that the portion left to him would be part of his own lands. On the other hand, there is no evidence of the existence of a castle in the township of Crogen in the lordship of Penllyn, whereas there is the evidence—in

[1] *Brut y Tywysogion* is the chronicle from which a large part of our knowledge of the earliest Welsh history is derived. "It was written at various periods, down to the last Llewelyn's time, when it closed. It is a translation of a Latin chronicle, kept at one time at Strata Florida, but also at other times in other places, *e.g.*, in the very early times at St. David's, and under Henry I at Llanbadarn, near Aberystwyth" (Prof. J. E. Lloyd).

[2] This township is in the eastern part of the parish of Llandderfel, see Prof. Lloyd's *History of Wales*, p. 614. Prof. Lloyd thinks there is a presumption in favour of the Penllyn site.

the survey of 1391-2—of the existence of a castle in the township of Crogen Iddon in Chirkland.

It is probable that the two earliest written allusions to "Chirkland" (under that name) which have come down to us are to be found in two small entries in the Pipe Rolls in 1163. In the first of these "Warinus, priest of Chirchelanda renders account of 7 marks of plea of Richard de Luci, which he delivered into the Treasury."[1] In the same year Isaac de Torpennoc, Sheriff of Shropshire, "renders account of one mark of assart of Chircheland."[2]

The Pipe Rolls being the national account-book of the period, and the money being paid into the Treasury, we have here the proof that Chirkland was at this period in the hands of the Crown.

[1] Pipe Rolls, New Pleas and new Agreements, 9 Henry II.

[2] Pipe Rolls as above. "Assartum=land cleared of wood and rendered arable. To assart land in the forest without licence was a grave offence, for whereas waste of the forest consisted in cutting down trees that might grow again, assart was plucking them up by the roots and destroying them for ever. Where ground was assarted by licence from the Crown, such ground was subject to assart rents." (*Pipe Roll Glossary.*)

THE BATTLE OF CROGEN

IN 1165 the valley of the Ceiriog springs into prominence and becomes the scene of one of those fierce struggles between Welsh and English which were to be a characteristic feature in the history of succeeding centuries. In this year Henry II embarked on the third of his Welsh expeditions.

The King's forces for this expedition were raised from every part of his dominions, in France, England, and Flanders, and the old writers speak of the result as a "vast army." He encamped at Oswestry, the army of the Welsh princes being gathered together at Corwen, in the valley of the Dee. Apparently neither side was inclined to make the first move. The Welsh were well aware of the advantage of fighting in their native hills, and Henry was equally aware of his disadvantage in attacking them there. After waiting for some time he was compelled to advance. He moved his army into the valley of the Ceiriog, and there he encountered what seems to have been a more or less irresponsible body of Welshmen, detached from the main army, and not under the command of the princes. This valiant little body of men opposed his passage, and here was fought the battle of Crogen.

In Giraldus Cambrensis' *Itinerary through Wales* we fortunately possess an account of the expedition by a

contemporary. It is not much more than a bare outline of the facts, but the few details it gives bear out those of the longer accounts. The fact that Giraldus was of mixed Norman and Welsh blood, and spent the chief part of his life between Wales (where he was born) and the court of Henry II, would seem to qualify him in an exceptional degree for the task of chronicling a struggle between Welsh and English. There is much in his writings which shows that he could look at the two peoples with a fairly impartial eye. After relating that Henry undertook three expeditions into Wales, he gives a few details about the third one.

"King Henry II entered the country of Powys, near Oswaldestree,[1] in our days, upon an expensive, though fruitless, expedition.

"Having dismembered the hostages whom he had previously received, he was compelled, by a sudden and violent fall of rain, to retreat with his army. On the

[1] "The second Kingdom was Mathraval. To this Kingdom belonged the countrie of Powys, and the land betwixt Wye and Severne. Which part had, upon the south and west, South Wales, with the rivers Wy and Tywy and other meeres. Upon the north Gwyneth and upon the east the marches of England from Chester to Wy, a little above Hereford: and therefore it was most troubled with wars, as well of the Saxons as afterwards of the Normanes Lords Marchers, who dailie wanne some part thereof, and by that means it was the first part that served the Kings of England, and therefore lesse esteemed of all the rest."

Powys, or Mathraval, was divided into Powys Fadog and Powys Wenwynwyn. Powys Fadog was again divided into five cantreds, or cantrefs, and these were again divided into comots.

Cantref Trefred contained the following comots: Croesvain (or Croeswaen), Tref-y-Vayn (or Waen), which was "in English Chirke and in Denbighshire," and Croes Oswallt "in English Oswestree and in Shropshire." See Price's *Description of Wales*.

preceding day the chiefs of the English army had burned some of the Welsh churches, with the villages and churchyards; upon which the sons of Owen the Great, with their light-armed troops, stirred up the resentment of their father and the other princes of the country, declaring that they would never in future spare any churches of the English. When nearly the whole army was on the point of assenting to this determination, Owen, a man of distinguished wisdom and moderation—the tumult being in some degree subsided—thus spake: 'My opinion, indeed, by no means agrees with yours, for we ought to rejoice at this conduct of our adversary; for, unless supported by divine assistance, we are far inferior to the English; and they, by their behaviour, have made God their enemy, who is able most powerfully to avenge both himself and us. We therefore most devoutly promise God that we will henceforth pay greater reverence than ever to churches and holy places.' After which, the English army, on the following night, experienced (as has before been related) the divine vengeance." [1]

Giraldus attributed the failure of Henry's three expeditions to lack of local information. "In all these expeditions," he comments, "the King was unsuccessful because he placed no confidence in the prudent and well-informed chieftains of the country, but was principally advised by people remote from the marches, and ignorant of the manners and of the customs of the natives."

[1] Giraldus Cambrensis' *Itinerary through Wales*, translated by Sir R. C. Hoare, pp. 459, 464-5, revised and edited by Thos. Wright, F.S.A.

The failure of these three expeditions resulted in a profound respect in Henry's mind for Welsh valour. Questioned by Emanuel, emperor of Constantinople, as to the peculiarities of the British Islands he informed him (among other striking facts) that "In a certain part of the island there was a people, called Welsh, so bold and ferocious that, when unarmed, they did not fear to encounter an armed force, being ready to shed their blood in defence of their country, and to sacrifice their lives for renown, which is the more surprising, as the beasts of the field over the whole face of the island became gentle, but these desperate men could not be tamed." [1]

Giraldus also pays a fine tribute to the courage of his countrymen the Welsh: "Not only the nobles but all the people are trained to war, and when the trumpet sounds the alarm, the husbandman rushes as eagerly from his plough as the courtier from his court. They anxiously study the defence of their country and their liberty; for these they fight, for these they undergo hardships, and for these they willingly sacrifice their lives; they deem it a disgrace to die in their bed, an honour to die in the field of battle."

The earliest account of the battle of Crogen which supplies any details of the action is found in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, or *Chronicle of the Princes*. The account is as follows:

"The King returned into England and collected a vast army of the choice warriors of England, Normandy, Flanders, Anjou, Gascony, and all Prydyn,[2] and came to

[1] Giraldus' *Description of Wales*, p. 491.

[2] In one manuscript we have the "force of the North."

Oswestry purposing to transport and destroy the whole of the Britons. And against him came Owain Gwynedd and Cadwalader, the sons of Gruffudd, son of Cynan, and the whole force of Gwynedd with them; also the Lord Rhys, son of Gruffudd, accompanied by the whole of South Wales, and Owen Cyveiliog, and Iorwerth the Red, . . . and the sons of Madoc, accompanied by the whole of Powys; also the two sons of Madoc, son of Idnerth, and their whole country with them. And together united and undaunted, they came into Edeyrnion, and encamped at Corwen. And after remaining there long in their tents, without one daring to attack the other, the King became extremely enraged, and moved his army into the woods of the Vale of Ceiriog, and ordered the woods to be cut and to be thrown down. And there a few chosen Welshmen came bravely to oppose him, who knew not what it was to be restrained in the absence of the princes; and many of the mightiest fell on each side. And from thence the King led his army into the mountain of Berwyn, and there the King encamped with his advanced troops, in the mountain of Berwyn. And after remaining there a few days, he was overtaken by a dreadful tempest of the sky and extraordinary torrents of rain. And when provisions had failed him he removed his tents and his army to the open plains of England; and full of extreme rage, he ordered the hostages, who had been previously long imprisoned by him, to be blinded; to wit, the two sons of Owain Gwynedd, Cadwallon and Cynvrig; and Howel and Maredudd, sons of the Lord Rhys, and many others."[1]

[1] *Brut y Tywysogion.*

In the two accounts above quoted the question of the exact site of the battle has not been touched upon. The next description is of much later date, and is contained in Powel's *Historie of Cambria*.[1] In this work the earlier account is amplified, and the phrase occurs to which previous reference has been made, *i.e.*, that the battle took place "at Offa's ditch at the castle of Crogen, at which place there was a narrow way through the same ditch." This is the only place at which the dyke crosses the Ceiriog valley.

The phrase about the "narrow way" tallies with the gap in the dyke existing at present at this spot, although this gap has been greatly enlarged by the making of two roads and the building of houses. This spot has always been indicated by local tradition as the site of the battle.

If we reconstruct the facts on the basis of the latest discovery regarding Crogen (*i.e.*, that there was a castle somewhere in the township of Crogen Iddon) we find that the tradition regarding the site of the battle is not affected in any way. Supposing the castle to have been situated in that angle of the township of Crogen Iddon, of which the river Ceiriog and the dyke form the sides, it would overlook the scene of the battle as recorded by Powel. Wherever the name "Crogen" has been preserved in the local place-names of the district to the present day, or can be traced in the manuscripts of the intervening centuries, the name applies to some place very near to this corner by the dyke. A farm and house overlooking the same spot, from the other bank of the river, bear the name of "Crogen-Wladys" to-day, as the

[1] See note on p. 24.

township on the same site bore it in the earliest surveys and estate accounts which are preserved.

All the facts previously given in support of the new theory regarding the site of Crogen tend to confirm Powel's statement that the battle took place "at the gap in Offa's ditch." According to local tradition, those who fell in the battle were buried in the fosse of Offa's dyke, at a spot close to Castle Mill, easily identified to-day. Powel, in his account of the battle, alludes to this tradition. Only by actual discovery of some trace of the earthwork of the castle of Crogen could we finally prove on what spot it stood. But the facts above stated, combined with the entry in the newly-discovered manuscript regarding the "castle" in the township of Crogen Iddon, would seem to point to its having stood on some spot near the present Castle Mill, and on the right bank of the river.

Doubt has recently been thrown[1] on the probability of this traditionary site being the correct one, on the ground that the spot was not on the natural line of the English army's march. From a study of the map alone this might seem an unanswerable argument. But an examination of the country between Oswestry and Corwen would suggest that other considerations, besides that of the shortest route, would enter into the problem. We have it on the authority of the "Brut" that Henry's army was a vast one, containing large numbers of foreign troops. These troops were unaccustomed to campaigning in the mountain regions, and we hear, in fact, a little later, of the demoralizing effect on them when they

[1] See note on p. 516 of Prof. J. E. Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. ii.

faced storm and rain on Welsh hill-sides. Henry's task was to transport this army from Oswestry to where the Welsh were encamped near Corwen, and to get them there in good fighting condition. By taking the straight route from Oswestry to Chirk, and then turning up the valley of the Ceiriog, the army would march, first, on open, level country (as far as Chirk) and would then follow the valley until the hillsides which hem it in became less steep, and a point was reached where it could turn off in the direction of Corwen.

In such a march up the valley what could be more probable than that a body of Welshmen should resist the advance of the English army at the spot where it entered Wales? Offa's dyke must at that time have been a much more effective obstacle than it is now, and would narrow down the attack to the area of "the gap" in it. It would be, in fact, the attempt to hold a narrow gateway into Wales. A better position for a skirmish between a handful of fighters resisting the advance of an army could not well be imagined.

To return to the alternative suggestion, *i.e.*, that Henry would take a straighter line from Oswestry in the direction of Corwen. Any one who now goes by one of the shorter routes from Oswestry into the Dee valley will see how exceptionally steep the hills are, and can judge how great the task would be of transporting a "vast" English army by such a route.

The following is the account given in Powel's *Historie*:

"In the year 1165 he [Henry II] returned to England, where he gathered another army of chosen men, through all his dominions, as England, Normandy, Anjou, Gascoine, and Gwyen; sending for succours from Flanders

and Brytaine; and then returned towards North Wales, minding utterly to destroy all that had life in the land, and comming to Croes Oswalt, called Oswaldstree,[1] incamped there. On the contrarie side, Prince Owen and his brother Cadwalader, with all the power of North Wales, and the Lord Rees, with the power of South Wales, and Owen Cyveliog, and the sonnes of Madoc ap Meredyth, with the power of Powys; and the two sonnes of Madoc ap Ednerth, with the people betwixt Wye and Seaverne, gathered themselves together and came to Corwen in Edeyrneon, purposing to defend their countrie. But the King understanding that they were so nigh, being wonderfull desirous of battel, came to the river Ceireoc, and caused the woods to be hewen down. Whereupon a number of the Welshmen understanding the passage, unknown to their captaines, met with the King's ward, where were placed the picked men of all the armie, and there began a hote skirmish, where diverse worthie men were slaine on either side, but in the end the King wonne the passage, and came to the mountain of Berwyne, where he lay in campe certaine daies, and so both the armies stood in awe of each other; for the King kept the open plaines, and was afraid to be intrapped in straits; but the Welshmen watched for the advantage of the place, and kept the King so straitlie, that neither forrage nor victuall might come to his camp, neither durst any soldiour stirre

[1] So called from the tradition that here a battle took place in the year 642, between the Christian King, Oswald of Northumbria, and the Pagan Penda, King of the Mercians. According to this tradition Oswald was defeated and killed, and his body was mutilated and placed on stakes at different parts of the battlefield. Hence "Oswald's tree."

abroad. And to augment these miseries, there fell such a raine, that the King's men could scant stand upon their feete upon these slipperie hilles. In the end, the King was compelled to returne home without his purpose, and that with great loss of men and munition, besides his charges. Therefore, in a great choler he caused the pledges' eies (whom he had received long before that) to be put out: which were Rees and Cadwalhon, the sonnes of Owen, and Cynwrie and Meredyth, the sons of Rees, and others. . . . I find also written by divers, that in the assieging of a bridge, the King was in no small danger of his life, for one of the Welshmen shooting directlie at him, had persed him through the bodie if Hubert de S. Clare, Constable of Colchester (perceiving the arrow coming) had not thrust himself betwixt the king and the same arrow, whereby he saved his master, and died himself for him presentlie."

About thirty pages further on Powel reverts to the battle, giving the details above alluded to, which, if correct, establish the place of the battle with great nicety, and also allude to the traditional place of burial. "And here I think it not unmeete to declare cause why the Englishmen used to call the Welshmen 'Crogens,' as a word of reproach and despite; but if they knew the beginning they should find it contrarie. For in the viage that King Henrie made against the Welshmen to the mountains of Berwyn, as he laie at Oswestrie, a number of his men that were sent to trie the passages, as they would have passed Offa's ditch, at the Castle of Crogen, at which place there was and is at this daie a narrow way through the same ditch (for that ditch appeareth yet to this daie verie deep through all that countrie, and

beareth his old name) these men I saie, as they would have passed the straite, were met withall, and a great number of them slaine, as appeareth by their graves there yet to be seene, whereof the name, Adw'r Beddau, or Pass of the Graves. Therefore the Englishmen afterward not forgetting this slaughter, used to cast the Welshmen in the teeth in all their troubles with the name of Crogen, as if they would signify unto them thereby that they should look for no favour but rather revengement at their hands: which word in process of time grew to be taken in another signification."[1]

Before dismissing these details on the score that we do not know of their having been recorded in writing before the sixteenth century, it is well to remember that an English tradition of the battle must have existed, as well as the local Welsh tradition. That it was so is clear from Powel's allusions to the nickname "Crogens," which he speaks of as a fact well known to his English readers, and one in the derivation of which he takes for granted they will be interested. Henry's great army, with its strangely mixed elements, must have carried into all parts of England and France the story of the stubborn resistance of that gallant little Welsh handful by the Ceiriog. It is impossible to tell from what sources, lost to us, Powel may have derived some of those "additions."

[1] Powel's *Historie of Cambria* (first edition, 1584, from which the above extract is taken, pp. 221, 222, 257) is a translation, by Humphrey Lloyd of Denbigh, of the *Brut y Tywysogion*, with large additions by Dr. David Powel of Ruabon, who published the *Historie*. The source of many of his additions is unknown. Caradoc of Llancarvan has been considered, until recent times, to be the author, or part author, of the *Brut y Tywysogion*, but according to the latest historical research there is no proof that he wrote a line of it.

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

OFFA'S DYKE AND THE GAP OF THE GRAVES

(THE TREE TO THE RIGHT IS ON THE DYKE)

Four hundred years is a short time in the life of a tradition. It is at least significant that local place-names, whether of to-day or the fourteenth century, whether handed down by tradition or preserved in the matter-of-fact form of a steward's estate accounts, confirm the detailed story of the battle. Not the least interesting of these traditional names is "The Gap of the Graves," still applied to a spot in the fosse at the point where the dyke is abruptly cut off, immediately above Castle Mill.

A brief mention of the battle occurs in the *Annales Cambriae*,[1] where it is chronicled that after the battle Henry encamped in the Berwyn mountains. No details are given.

The site of Henry's camp in the Berwyn mountains, and the route by which he attempted to cross to Corwen from the valley of the Ceiriog, are interesting matters for speculation. About a mile and a half below the village of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, where a few houses and a school form the village of Tregeiriog, a road branches off from the main road of the valley, in the direction of Corwen. There is a tradition among some of the older inhabitants that this road used to be called "The road of the English." Another name given to it by some of the old people has a significant sound. An old woman living within a stone's throw of the point where it joins the main road at Tregeiriog, when questioned[2] as to its name replied "Strêt Fawr" ("The Great Road").

[1] "Leaving out the oldest MS., which stops before the Norman Conquest, the *Annales Cambriae* are really two distinct chronicles, both based on the original *Brut*, but in the later entries running quite independently of it." (Prof. J. E. Lloyd.)

[2] In 1908.

The use of the word "strêt" here, instead of the usual "fford" is an indication that the road was of some importance.

Tradition in the neighbourhood—even among those who do not use this name for the road in question—asserts that the road was paved throughout its entire length. If this were so, the likelihood of its having been the road chosen by Henry II is enormously increased. It is extremely improbable that there would be more than one paved road leading from so small a valley as that of the Ceiriog in the direction of Corwen.

As this road rises into the hills it becomes much rougher, and more like a mountain path, but it is marked on the map without a break from the high road of the Ceiriog valley to the high road between Corwen and Bala. In its course over the hills it passes within about half a mile of a prehistoric camp[1] situated to the north of Llanarmon village.

It has been suggested[2] that Henry's army may have camped on this site. The suggestion is not in any way far-fetched, as it is known that Owain Glyndwr, more than two hundred years later, made use of a prehistoric camp. Cerrig Gwynion, the hill on which the Llanarmon camp is situated, is so called from a line of "white stones," *i.e.*, white spar, which crowns the top of the ridge. The situation is a fine and commanding one, and the area enclosed by the ancient earthwork is large, and lies on the slope of the hill which is protected from the prevailing north-west winds.

[1] Mr. Edward Owen, as the result of a first visit to the camp, is of the opinion that it probably belongs to the bronze age.

[2] Article in *Archaeologica Cambrica*, ser. iv, vol. iii, by "D. R. T."

For many years after the battle of Crogen, the existing records relating to Chirk are very scanty and scattered.

In the same year as that in which the battle of Crogen took place there is an entry in the Pipe Rolls of a sum of £6 19*s.* 8*d.* charged by the Sheriff of Shropshire "in Wardenship of the Castle of Chirk."[1] 1165.

Again in the next year the Sheriff sends in an account to the Treasury "In Wardenship of the Castle of Chirch[2] from the feast of St. Michael until the week before Palm Sunday, of 2 knights, and 1 porter, 1 watchman and 19 servants—£31 0*s.* 11*d.*"[3] 1166.

In 1167 Chirk was still a Crown castle. William de Bello Campo, in rendering account to the Treasury of the rent of certain lands in Worcestershire, deducts a sum of £4 3*s.* 8*d.* for "40 seams of corn delivered to Yernerd Coch to provision the castle of Chirk. By writ of Richard de Luci." This Richard de Luci is the same who figured in an earlier record (1163) in connection with Chirkland. 1167.

On 2nd August 1212, Robert de Vipont being beseiged in Mathraval Castle by the Welsh, was rescued by King John in person. Within the next four days Robert de Vipont undertook the custody of the four castles of

[1] Pipe Rolls, 11 Henry II. The Rev. R. W. Eyton, in his *Court household and Itinerary of Henry II*, speaks of this sum as being an account of the "Sheriff's expenses while at Chirk Castle." The authority for this interpretation is not given. A similar entry for the following year, in which details are given, seems to point to the sum having been required for the regular staff of the Castle.

[2] The spelling of the name is exceedingly variable in all the early documents.

[3] Pipe Rolls, 12 Henry II.

Oswestry, Castle Crogen, Careg Hyfa,[1] and Eggelawe."[2] Robert de Vipont and his brother Ivo are spoken of in Roger de Wendover's Chronicle as among the most evil counsellors of King John in this same year. They belong to the great Vipont family which had been settled in Westmorland since Henry II's reign.

Robert de Vipont was clearly a favourite of King John, as he married him to the heiress of the de Busli family.

1213. In 1213 there is an entry, in the Pipe Rolls, of £5 paid for a bretache for the Castle of Chirk.[3] This proves that it was still a Crown castle.

[1] Or Carreghova; a castle near Llanymynech.

[2] Eggelawe is Euloe, near Hawarden. The above passage is from the Chevalier Lloyd's *History of Powys Fadog*. His authority for some of the facts contained in this passage is not given. But that Mathraval Castle was "rescued" by the King's forces in this year we know from the following entry in the Pipe Rolls of John's reign: "In payment of 1000 foot soldiers and 40 horsemen for 6 days, and in the cost of rescuing the castles of Haliwell (Holywell) and Madrael (Mathraval) £100. And in the works of the castles of Karracove (Carreghova) and Madrael 50 marks. . . . And for pikes and provisions in the castle of Eggelawe £6 3*s.* 0*d.*" (Pipe Rolls, 14 John).

[3] Pipe Roll, 14 John. Bretache, bretasche, or bretèche was the name given to various kinds of wooden and crenellated towers, forming part of the castles of the Norman period. The word is sometimes used for the whole wooden tower that was erected on the mound of the Norman motte-and-bailey castle. But it also stood for certain structures somewhat like wooden balconies or turrets, which were either fixed over the gateways of a castle, or at the angles of the building, projecting so as to command views in three directions. £5 at this period would be equivalent to about £100 of our money to-day.

CHIRKLAND UNDER THE MORTIMERS

THE process by which Chirkland came into the hands of the Mortimers has been the subject of a persistent legend. The historical facts, as established by the latest research, are as follows:

In 1236 Griffith ap Madoc obtained Chirkland as part of Northern Powys, his inheritance from his father, who died that year. Madoc ap Griffith, his father, had fought on the side of Llewelyn the Great against the English. The son, however (Griffith ap Madoc), to whose share Chirkland fell, went over to the English side. The influence of his English wife, Emma Audley, may perhaps have brought this about. In August 1241 we find him opposing the Welsh prince David, son of Llewelyn the Great. For this support of the English side he seems to have received an exchequer pension. On the other hand probably he suffered heavily from David's attacks on Northern Powys in the summer of 1244. When—some years after the death of David—his nephew, Llewelyn ap Griffith (grandson of Llewelyn the Great) fought his way to supremacy among the Welsh Princes, Griffith ap Madoc was defeated, in 1256, and his land harried by this prince.[1] In the following year Griffith went over to

[1] Prof. Lloyd points out that as the only mention of this is in Matthew Paris's Chronicle (*Annales Cambriae* and the *Brut* both being silent on the point), Paris may have made a mistake.

the Welsh side, to which cause he adhered till his death in 1269.[1]

It is at this point that the legend before alluded to steps in. Powel, in his *Historie of Cambria*, states that Griffith left several sons under age. These sons, he asserts, were placed under English guardians—Roger Mortimer being given the guardianship of Llewelyn, to whose share Chirkland fell. "These guardians," says Powel, "forgetting the service doone by the father of the wardes to the King, so garded their wardes that they never returned to their possessions." Another old account amplifies this. "But shortlie ye both wards died without issue, yet afterwards ye other guardians held them still in possession of the lordships aforesaid, and would never after be driven from them; and to procure themselves some culler to hold ye same, in the tenth year of Edward I Roger Mortimer obtained a grant from ye King of ye said lordshippes and by force and colour thereof held ye same from ye right heirs for ever after."[2]

Camden, writing in the sixteenth century, repeats the same story, which, indeed, reappears in almost all short accounts of Chirkland that have been written since his day.

The result of the latest research is to disprove the story of the wardship *in toto*, as applied to the sons of Gruffydd ap Madoc. All these four sons, namely Madoc, Llewelyn, Owain, and Gruffydd, lived to grow up and

[1] For the above facts regarding the career of Griffith ap Madoc, see *A History of Wales*, by Prof. J. E. Lloyd, pp. 697, 699, 719, 722, 747, where the original sources are given in footnotes.

[2] Harleian MS., Brit. Mus. *A Description of the Dominion of Wales.*

to inherit their respective portions of their father's lands.[1] Llewelyn and Owain disappear in the war of 1282, but Gruffydd got Glyndyfrdwy, and became the ancestor of Owain Glyndwr.[2] In 1283 Edward I granted Chirkland to Roger Mortimer, as the result of the forfeiture of "Llewelini Vaughan, inimici Regis."[3]

This phrase is sufficient to prove that Llewelyn had reached manhood.

The legendary story placed the death of the two wards in 1281. This supplies the key to the probable origin of the tale. For it is stated by several modern authorities that two *grandsons* of Gruffydd ap Madoc (Llewelyn and Gruffydd by name) died in 1281. But even if the story of the wardship were transferred to them, it would not concern Chirk, which was no part of the inheritance of their father, Madoc ap Gruffydd of Dinas Bran. If it is true that they died in 1281, their uncle Llewelyn was alive at this time, and in possession of Chirk.[4] The allusion in the legendary story to "the service done by the father of the wards to the King," is specially wide of the mark, in view of the fact that the said father had been on the Welsh side for many years before his death.

An ode addressed by the Welsh poet Llygadgwr to Llewelyn of Chirk has fortunately been preserved in the Myvyrian Archaeology, and is of great interest. The following is a translation:

[1] For original authorities see Prof. Lloyd's History, p. 747.

[2] I am indebted to Prof. Lloyd for the fact of Llewelyn and Owain's disappearance in this war.

[3] Ayloffe's *Rotuli Walliae*, p. 78.

[4] According to tradition the boys were drowned under Holt Bridge. Mr. A. N. Palmer tells me that the bridge was not built at that time.

LLYGAD GWR to LLEWELYN son of Gruffudd son of Ma(dawc) son of Gr(uffudd) [1]

Hail thou of great and high discretion,
From God [2] the foremost leader of forces;
Prosperous elder of the excelling spear,
Inexorable is thy wrath, thou defence [3] in battle.
To thee, prosperous lord of the red course of battle,
Llewelyn, may there be a host of armed steeds,
And fame and the conquest of the vale of Ceiriog.
Thou brave one of the claim of contest and of the long wrathful charge,
Who makest commotion with thy men, may they be submissive
To thee, the dragon of Chirk, with the obstinate spear;
And burning Trewen [4] be thine, overshadowing lord,
And may Ellesmere bear thy wounds, thou of the honoured following.
Fleet eagle of the spears, of subduing vehemence,
In the front of battle almighty prince,
Before thy attack, thou prominent defender,[5]
Terror spreads as far as the citadel of Evrawc.[6]
Red-speared son of Gruffudd of the spreading fame,
Mightily brave and generous support of the race of Madawc,
Great is thy progress, foremost of knights in battle,
Majestic is thy country, thou of the flowing grace;
And I, like an inspired instructor,
In me dwells the memory of a privileged guest.[7]
I shall sing thy profoundest praise, thou leader of Powys,
Becoming upon me is thy protection, thou mighty one.
Mayst thou, who art uniformly famous,
Be, according to thy wishes, puissant,
And in the end [mayst thou have] supreme glory
[And] the mercy of merciful God.

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[1] The MS. is faulty in places.
[2] By the will of God. [3] Wall.
[4] This seems to be accepted by experts as being Whittington. Prof. Lloyd calls it "y drewen."
[5] Column. [6] York. [7] At the King's table.

The allusions to the Mortimers in the national records are exceedingly confusing. No fewer than four Roger Mortimers appear in the documents of the time, and beyond such epithets as "the elder" or "the uncle," we are often given no clue to the identity of the Roger in question.

The fortunes of the first two Roger Mortimers are unconnected with Chirk. To Roger the third—commonly called Roger of Chirk—the castle and lands were granted. Roger Mortimer of Chirk (1256?-1326)[1] was the third son of Roger Mortimer II, sixth Baron Wigmore. He was knighted in his father's lifetime, and appears to have been considered a person of importance. The following royal licence was granted him in 1281: "Licence for Roger de Mortuo Mari[2] the younger to hunt the fox and the hare with his own hounds in all the forests of the counties of Salop and Stafford, outside the covert, until next Easter; provided that he take none of the King's great game."[3] In 1282 his father died, and in the same year Edward granted Llewelyn's lands to Roger Mortimer, thereby creating a new Marcher lordship of Chirk.[4]

In 1284 there is a grant to Roger of pontage[5] for three years, "in aid of the repair and maintenance of his bridge

[1] The exact date of Roger's birth is not known. The approximate date given above is taken from the sketch of his life in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

[2] The usual form in which the name is given in the contemporary records.

[3] Patent Rolls, 1281-92.

[4] Grant made at Shrewsbury, 2nd June 1282 (Ayloffe's *Rotuli Walliae*, p. 78).

[5] A toll or tax for the maintenance and repair of bridges.

of Thlangotthlan,"[1] showing how far Roger's lands extended. In 1292 Roger seems to have got into trouble with local authorities in the north over a question of the chase, for we have a notification of the King's will "that Roger de Mortimer, to whom he gave licence by word of mouth to take venison in the forest of Middleshouere [Berwick on Tweed] be not molested for having taken a brocket without the King's writ." A licence is also granted "for the said Roger to hunt with his dogs and men such deer which he and his men start in his lands and free chaces in Wales, throughout all the forests of Wales, and to take and carry them away."[2]

He was first summoned to Parliament in 1299. He was present at the Lincoln parliament in 1301, where he signed the famous letter of the Barons to the Pope.[3] He took part in the wars of Edward I.

A complaint lodged by Roger in 1302 throws a curious light on the lawlessness of the times. A commission is given to "Roger de Suthcote and John de Foxle" to inquire into a "complaint by Roger de Mortuo Mari, that while he was in Gascony on the King's service and under his protection, and had caused his stud to be taken from his manor of Chirk in Wales, towards his manor of Hopton Wafers,[4] co. Salop, by some of his servants, Henry, prior of Wenlock, Raymond de Wenlock, Roger de Parva Hereford, his fellow-monks, Walter de Calverton the elder and others led away some mares of the value

[1] Patent Rolls, 1281-92. Llangollen was in the commote of Nanheudwy and the lordship of Chirk.

[2] *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

[3] Patent Rolls, 30 Edw. I.

[4] So called in Sir Henry Spelman's *Villare Anglicum.*

of 200 marks, as the stud was passing through the prior's lands at Wenlock, Oxenbold, Weston, Hopton Priors, etc., co. Salop." Whether Roger got his mares again there is no record to tell us.

On the accession of Edward II Roger of Chirk was made lieutenant to the King, and in the following year justice of Wales. From this time till his fall in 1322 he seems to have wielded great power. One writer says that he "ruled Wales like a king."[1] Edward II, 1307.

On 15th January 1308 we find a "grant to Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk—to whom the King committed the custody of all Wales, viz., of North Wales, West Wales, and South Wales, with the castle of Kaernarvon, and also the office of justice—of 350 marks for the custody of the land and that of office, and of 150 marks for that of the castle, to be renewed by him yearly from the chamberlain or receiver of the King, so long as he holds the above custody."[2]

In March protection is granted "until Whitsuntide, for Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk, going into Wales on the King's service"; and in June "protection as above, staying in Wales as Justice."[3]

Two years later the castles of Blaynleveny and Dynas are granted to him.

An indenture of 1315 affords a brief glimpse of the fortunes of Bron-y-garth. It runs as follows: "Indenture made Thursday before St. Peter in Cathedra 8 Edward II, between Esmon (Edmund) Earl of Arundel of the one part, and Roger de Mortimer, Lord of Chirk, of the other, whereby the said Roger by a bond under the 1315.

[1] *Dict. Nat. Biog.* [2] Patent Rolls, 1308. [3] *Ibid.*

Statute of Merchants in £20,000 of Sir Peter Corbet made at Salop and other letters of Edw. I and the present King, and which the said Roger made over to the said Earl; by this grant the Earl gives to Roger the vill of Brunagard"[Bron-y-garth]and pays certain sums(stated) at certain dates.[1] At some time between 1319 and 1321 he was granted £100 for his expenses towards the war in Scotland.[2]

During these years of power Roger Mortimer of Chirk was closely associated in his actions with his nephew, Roger Mortimer (the fourth), eighth Baron Wigmore, afterwards created Earl of March. The identity of names, together with the fact that Roger the younger played a much larger part in English history than his uncle, has caused many later writers to attribute to the nephew acts that were really those of Roger of Chirk.

In March 1321 the following is dated from Westminster: "To Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk, Justice of Wales. Order to cause the castles in the parts of Wales to be provided with victuals, armour, and other necessary furniture without delay, by the survey of Robert de Wodehous, whom the King is sending to these parts in this behalf, and to aid and counsel Robert in this behalf, and to cause the King's works in the castles to be superseded until further orders, provided that the outer walls of the castles be defensible, and the works on them be put in such state that they may be saved and kept without damage."[3]

[1] Harleian MS., f. 49*b*. In French.

[2] Exchequ. Q. R. Counterenrollment of works on castles in North Wales, 12-14 Edw. II.

[3] Close Rolls, Edw. II.

In 1321 an order was sent to him from the King (5th March 1321) "to cause Griffin, son of Madoc ap Gruffyd, tenant in chief, to have seisin of his father's lands, as he has proved his age before the said justice and the King has taken his homage." [1] 1321.

In this same year came Roger's downfall. The cause of his loss of favour with the King was his action in taking up arms against the Despensers, who were high in the King's favour. In November of the same year Roger of Chirk was summoned "to come to the King at Cirencester on Sunday the feast of St. Lucy, to inform the King and his council concerning the state of Wales." [2]

This summons practically amounted to the spider's invitation to the fly, and that Roger so regarded it is tolerably clear from events that followed.

On 15th January of the following year Roger had still discreetly refrained from accepting the invitation, which now took a more pressing form. The King issued the following Proclamation from Shrewsbury: "To Richard Lovel, constable of Bristol Castle, or to him who supplies his place: Order to arrest and imprison Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, Roger de Mortuo Mari of Wygemore, Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk" [and others, whose names are given] "and all in their company who took by night and burned the town of Briggenorth, whither the King had sent certain of his servants to make his purveyances there, and who attacked 1322.

[1] Close Rolls, Edw. II. In Prof. Lloyd's opinion this is probably a grandson of the Griffith who was one of the four sons of Griffith ap Madoc, and who received Glyndyfrdwy in 1283, and became the ancestor of Owain Glyn Dwr.

[2] Close Rolls, Edw. II.

the King's servants aforesaid, beating and wounding some of them and slaying others, and who afterwards took in like manner the castles of Elmele and Heule, which are in the King's hands, and beat and wounded his servants and men therein, and took and carried away certain of them, and slew others, and burned the gates and houses of the aforesaid castles, detaining the said town and castles against the King, and who stole the garments, jewels, beasts and other goods and chattels of the King's men and subjects in the surrounding parts, slaying certain of the said men, and detaining others in prison until they made grievous ransoms." Further, the Proclamation announces that the King, "unwilling to leave such trespasses unpunished," orders the Sheriff of Salop to call out all men between sixteen and sixty, to provide themselves with suitable arms, and be ready to come into the King's service "for the punishment of the aforesaid malefactors." The Sheriff is also to make proclamation that the King is journeying through the realm for the purpose of punishing such trespasses, "and not by reason of any disturbance among the people or by reason of war to be made in the land," and that all persons shall maintain the peace.[1]

After this it is no surprise to find that, about a fortnight later, Roger Mortimer of Chirk was forced to surrender to the King at Shrewsbury. Then follows a mandate to all persons in the Castle of Chirk to deliver the custody of the Castle to certain persons appointed by the King.[2] We have seen that "Roger Mortuo Mari of Wygmore" (the nephew) was among those named in the

[1] Close Rolls, Edw. II.
[2] Patent Rolls, 15 Edw. II, Part I.

order of arrest. He must have surrendered to the King at Shrewsbury at the same time as his uncle, "Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk," as both were imprisoned in the Tower. The following year they were both condemned to be drawn and hung for their sedition and treason.[1] This sentence was revoked and Roger the uncle died in the Tower, 3rd August 1326, after four years' captivity. According to some authorities he was buried at Chirk, and according to others at Wigmore. Roger the nephew escaped from the Tower, and was subsequently restored to his lands. The heir of Roger of Chirk was also nominally restored to his possessions. As a matter of fact, the lands of Chirk were shortly afterwards given to the Earl of Arundel. Roger's grandson finally sold to the earl such rights over Chirk as he nominally possessed.[2]

We have now to return to the period immediately following the arrest and imprisonment of the two Roger Mortimers in January 1321. Chirk Castle had been placed in the hands of certain persons appointed by the King. In February an order was issued to "Peter Giffard keeper of the land of Chirk" (amongst others) "to raise a number of footmen and send them suitably armed to join the King at Coventry to set out with the King against the Scots."[3]

In the same month an order was issued to the three men appointed keepers of the "castles, lands, goods and

[1] Chancery Rolls, Miscellaneous, 17/2. On the back of the Roll recording this judgment is a memorandum to the effect that this sentence was revoked, and that the heir of Roger the uncle was restored to his lands, and Roger the nephew restored to his.

[2] Harleian MS., British Museum, dated 12 Oct., 33 Edw. III.

[3] Close Rolls, Edw. II.

chattels" of Earl Humphrey de Bohun, Roger de Mortuo Mari of Wigmore, Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk, etc., "to cause all money to be levied that he can of the goods and chattels, underwood and other things of the aforesaid men, and to cause such money and the money now in hand from the issues of the said castles and lands, or that he can levy shortly, to come into the King's chamber."[1] Another order of the same year (1322) furnishes some interesting details of the hunting customs of the time. The King gives instructions for extensive hunting operations all over the country. Sheriffs of counties are instructed "to pay reasonable expenses" for the gentlemen and huntsmen whom the King sends "to take fat venison of this season in the king's forests, chases, and parke, and to receive the fat venison taken by them, and cause it to be put in barrels and salted and kept until further order." Similar instructions are given "for the forests, chases, and parks that belonged to Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk." Twenty greyhounds and forty staghounds are sent. The huntsman is to be paid $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ per day for his own wages, $2d.$ for each of the "ventrers and berners," $1d.$ per day for the "page," and $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per day for each greyhound and staghound."[2]

In this same year a "Mandate and Request" is issued to certain commotes, lands, and contreds, in which "the land of Chirk and the commotes and towns therein" are included, to come "properly armed to the King's assistance in the Scotch expedition, as their laudable assistance lately given when the King was pursuing the rebels in

[1] Close Rolls, Edw. II.

[2] These sums must be multiplied by twenty to obtain something like the equivalent in modern money. See note 2, p. 45.

Photo by] *[Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

CHIRK CASTLE FROM THE NORTH-EAST

the Marches of Wales makes the King confident they will be ready to do so. They are not to take it ill that their petitions before the King and Council in the Parliament of York were postponed, as the King was fully occupied preparing for the said expedition. But on the King's return they shall be attended to." [1]

Powel, in his *Historie*, tells us that "Roger Mortimer Justice of North Wales builded the castle of Chirk." [2] He quotes no earlier authority for the statement. The present Chirk Castle is undoubtedly of the Edwardian type, which fact, so far as it goes, tends to confirm his statement.

That Roger of Chirk abused his extraordinary power both in his relations with his smaller neighbours and with his tenants is proved by various records that have survived. In the July following Roger's arrest and imprisonment the King issued the following: "Order to deliver to William la Zousch of Assheby the manor of Elmeleys Lovet, co. Worcester, as the King learns by inquisition, taken by the escheator, that Roger de Mortuo Mari of Chirk, a late rebel, violently ejected William from the said Manor in 15 days from Midsummer in the 14th year of the King's reign, and took and carried away his goods found there to the value of 100 marks, and detained the manor thus occupied until it was taken into the King's hands with Roger's other lands." [3]

[1] Patent Rolls, 15 Edw. II, Part I.
[2] First edition, p. 113.
[3] Close Rolls, Edw. II.

WORK AND WAGES IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

AFTER the battle of Shrewsbury and Roger Mortimer's fall and imprisonment, the Chirk estates changed hands with bewildering frequency. By the year 1324 Chirk was given to Edmund, Earl of Arundel, who was also made Justiciar of Wales in Roger Mortimer's place. During his brief tenure he granted two important charters to Chirk. One of these dealt with the tenure of land, and will be quoted later, when it was confirmed by his son Richard after an interval of ten years. The second was a charter to the town of Chirk and ran as follows:

Edmund, Earl of Arundel's Charter to the town of Chirk, 1324.

"Let the present and future generations know that we, Edmund Earl of Arundell, have given, granted and by this our present charter have confirmed to our Burgesses of Chirk, the free borough with free burgages with all merchandize in the same, to be exercised freely, quietly, well and in peace, to them and their assigns, with all & every liberty belonging to a free borough in the form of Hereford and Shrewsbury, with hausbote and haibote,[1]

[1] *Hausbote* [=house bote] is the right, under the supervision of the chief forester, to cut timber in the lord's woods for the erection of houses.

Haibote [=hay bote] is the right to cut branches, under the same supervision, for fencing of enclosures="hays."—A. N. Palmer.

and fuel, common pasture throughout the whole of our land of Chirk and wheresoever our free tenants or others enjoy the right of common or ought to enjoy it.

"Also we have granted to the same our Burgesses that they shall be quit through all our lands, so within our earldom as outside, of all and every tolls, stallages, passages, bridges, tallages, murages, to be rendered and paid to us and our heirs by the Burgesses and their heirs aforesaid, for any burgage annually, twelve pence of money at the feast of St. Michael for all secular services, actions and demand. Moreover we have granted to the said Burgesses that they should have a Court in the town aforesaid and bailiffs elected by them, on whose behalf they shall answer for the office of a free Borough to be exercised, and services which belong to a free borough to be paid. And that by honest and legal men in the presence of our steward they may be taxed concerning the same if they should be committed for any transgression. And we indeed, the said Edmund and our heirs, to the Burgesses and their heirs and assigns, the borough aforesaid with all its rights and liberties before named, will warrant and defend against all men of peace. In witness whereof our seal is put to these presents, these being witnesses, John de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, Thomas de Belle Compo, Earl of Warwick, John de Cherleton, William le Botiler de Wemme, John Pecche and others. Dated at our castle of Clonne 1 May, 18 Edward II" (1324).[1]

Edmund, Earl of Arundel's possession of Chirk was very brief. In 1326 when Mortimer and Isabella invaded 1326.

[1] Puleston MSS.

England, Arundel stuck to the King (Edward II), and paid for it with his life. He was executed by Queen Isabella to satisfy Mortimer's hostility. This execution deprived Arundel's son, Richard, of his father's titles and estates. In 1330, after the fall of Mortimer (Earl of March), Richard petitioned the crown for re-instatement, and obtained it after some delay.[1] From the interim period, before this re-instatement took place, and while the castle and lands of Chirk were in the hands of custodians temporarily appointed by the King, several manuscripts of great interest have been preserved.

1329. The first of these is a long account of repairs to Chirk castle, fencing in the park, expenses of horses, dogs, sparrow-hawks, together with salaries and wages—the whole account being full of valuable and interesting details.

In this account we are enabled for the first time in the annals of Chirkland to turn from the almost exclusive record of the doings of kings, earls, and lords over great possessions, to facts which give us glimpses into the life of the workman of Chirk, and the wages paid to him and to the various officials, great and small, who worked the estate.

The first paragraph of the account deals with repairs to certain water mills in the Ceiriog valley. Gaps in the manuscript make the items paid undecipherable, but two mills are spoken of—the "mill of Llanarmon" and "the fulling mill." The site of the latter is probably identified for us by the name of the group of houses between Glyn and Llanarmon, still called "the Pandy"—"pandy" being the Welsh for a fulling mill. At this period the right of

[1] Actual possession in 1334, with Patent Roll confirmation in 1337.

having a mill (whether worked by wind or water) usually belonged to the lord, and it is probable that on most estates the tenants were obliged to use the lord's mill and pay so much on the corn they had ground. As time went on these mills were usually let out to farm, the landlord at first paying for new millstones or sails, but at a later period the tenant undertaking repairs.[1] Judging from certain entries in a Chirk account of two years later it is probable that the two mills mentioned above were let out to farm (the landlord doing the repairs) but that the free tenants of Chirkland were obliged to use these mills. We shall see later that the tenants considered this, and justly so, an infringement of ancient rights.

The second paragraph of the account supplies us with two examples of weekly wages. These amounts must be multiplied by twenty to give the approximate equivalent in modern money.[2] The difference in purchasing power between the money of those days and that of our own time may be illustrated by a few examples. Sheep averaged about one shilling each, and the meat would be about a farthing a pound. Beef was only a very little dearer. In the year of this account (1329-30) hens were 1½*d.*, pullets 1¼*d.*, geese 3½*d.*, ducks 1¾*d.*, pigeons 3½*d. per dozen.* But a much more important item in the life of the poor man was the price of wheat. At this period 6 lb. of wheat could be bought for a penny.

[1] See Prof. Thorold Rogers' *History of Agriculture and Prices*, vol. i, p. 33.

[2] Authorities differ considerably as to the number by which to multiply at this period. Some put it at much lower than twenty. But a study of the food-prices given on this page will show that the purchasing power of money at this time was even *more* than twenty times that of our own day.

House rent was a negligible quantity, the country labourer or artisan living in what we should now describe as a wretched hovel.

The period at which this account is rendered was one of exceptional prosperity—a happy breathing-space between two seasons of terrible suffering for the country folk of England. In the years 1315 and1316 the harvest throughout the whole country had utterly failed, owing to the incessant rain. The corn never ripened. According to contemporary writers the poorer classes were constrained to live on unwholesome or disgusting food, and numbers of them perished from famine. That the loss of life was considerable is proved by the rise of wages after the famines were over.[1] We are told that "the King [Edward II] revoked the provisions before made for selling of victuals, and permitted all men to make the most of what they had; nevertheless the dearth increased through the abundance of raine that fell in harvest, so that a quarter of wheate or of salt was sold before mid-summer for thirty shillings, and after, forty shillings. There followed this famine [1316] a grevious mortality of people, so that the quick might unneath[2] bury the dead. . . . The beasts and cattal also by the corrupt grasse whereof they fed, dyed, whereby it came to passe that the eating of flesh was suspected of all men; for flesh of beastes not corrupted was hard to finde. Horse-flesh was counted great delicates; the poor stole fatte dogges to eate."[3]

The famine of 1316.

[1] See Rogers' *Six Centuries of Work and Wages.*

[2] Uneath or unneath; scarcely, not easily.

[3] *Stow's Chronicle.* Quoted by C. Hardwick in his preface to *A Poem of the Times of Edward II.*

A poem written somewhere about 1320 opens as follows:

"Why werre and wrake hn londe
And manslaught is y-come,
Why honger and derthe on erthe
The pour hath over-nome,[1]
Why bestes beth i-storve,[2]
And why corne is so dere,
Ye that wyl abyde,
Lysten and ye mow here."[3]

To return to the Chirk account of 1329. At this time the country had recovered from the famines, and the artisan and labourer in most parts of England was benefiting by the rise of wages due to the shortage of labour.

Wages in Chirk in 1329.

Many of the payments here given are by fixed sum for the job, and therefore do not give us the weekly wage. But others are stated by the week or day.

The purchasing power of these wages, in terms of modern money, would work out, approximately, at something like the following: *tiler*, £1 13*s.* 4*d.* per week; *tiler's labourer*, 15*s.* per week; *carpenter*, £1 6*s.* 8*d.* per week; *park keeper*, 11*s.* 8*d.* per week; *porter*, £1 3*s.* 4*d.* per week. The salary of the chaplain would be equivalent to about £53 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum, and that of the interpreter to £20. In this same year carpenters were getting 4*d.* a day in other parts of England, and Merton College, Oxford, was paying its tilers as much as 6*d.* a day. This last wage, however, was exceptionally high.

[1] Over-nome; overtaken.
[2] I-storve; dead, perished.
[3] *A Poem of the Times of Edward II.*

Some quaint and unexpected touches relieve the matter-of-fact business of this account—not the least being the delightful apparition of the lord's wolf-hound with her eight puppies—a little family party whose fame has thus come down to us through nearly six centuries.

Expenses of Chirk Castle[1]

1329-30.

". . . Chirk 16*d.* by the same tallage.

The repairs of the mill.

Item the same renders account in wages of Ken ap Diske . . . the fulling mill to be made anew by the task 60*s.* . . .

And in repair of the wood-work of the mill of Lanarmon . . . and in one mill-stone bought for the same mill 2*s.*

Total sum £3 2*s.*

The repair of the roof of the stone house.

Item the same renders account in payment of one tiler for the repair of the roof of the rooms beyond the gate of the Castle . . . of the stable outside the Castle for 9 weeks, 15*s.*, taken by the week 1*s.* 8*d.*, by tallage against Nicholas the forester. . . . In payment of one man attending upon the same for the same time 6*s.* 9*d.*, taken by the week 9*d.*

And four thousand stones to be quarried to the same use 14*s.*, by the same tallage, to wit for every thousand 3*s.* 6*d.* And in carriage of the said stones from the quarry to the Castle 6*s.* 8*d.* by the same tallage, to wit for every thousand 1*s.* 8*d.*

[1] The following is a translation of the Latin original now in the Record Office. The gaps are due to the MS. being torn in parts.

And in nails bought for the same use 5*d.*

And in tools for the tiler to be repaired 3*d.*

And in 30 bushels of lime bought to the same use 2*s.*

And in the carriage of the said lime 1*s.*

And in one two-headed axe for breaking the stones in the quarry 6*d.* by the same tallage.

Total £2. 7*s.* 1*d.*

Item the same renders account in payment of the said tiler for repair of the roof of the great bakery in the Castle at a fixed sum 10*s.*, by tallage against Colin the forester. Also the repair of the roof.

And in 30 bushels of lime bought for the same 2*s.* 6*d.* by the same tallage.

And in carriage of the same 1*s.* by the same tallage.

And in one thousand three hundred stones to be quarried 5*s.* 3*d.*, to wit for one thousand 4*s.* 2*d.*

And in carriage of the same 2*s.*

And in payment of the said tiler for repair of the Chapel of the lord in the vill of Chirk 10*s.* at a fixed sum, by tallage against the aforesaid Nicholas the forester.

And in 40 bushels of lime bought for the same 3*s.* 4*d.*

And in carriage of the same 1*s.* 2*d.* by the same tallage.

And in one thousand stones to be quarried 4*s.* 6*d.*

And in carriage of the same 1*s.* 8*d.* by the same tallage.

Total 41*s.* 5*d.*

Item the same renders account in payment of two carpenters for two gates to be made anew about the park of Chirk, and for paling of the said park at intervals The costs round about the paling of the park.

round about each, to be repaired by the year 10*s.*, by view of Nicholas the forester and by tallage against the same.

And in carriage of timber for the said work 1*s.* 8*d.*

Total 11*s.* 8*d.*

And in expenses of the receiver Eden Gam Lewelyn ap Atha and 4 grooms of the horses and their boys, for four days going and returning, for the said money to be carried from Chirk to Wygemor and to be delivered to the aforesaid Roger Elies, together with expenses of 3 carrying horses and 3 grooms 13*s.* 4*d.*

And in expenses of the receiver and 3 grooms for 4 days going and returning from Chirk to Worcester for forty pounds to be carried there to Lord Thomas de Bromleye receiver of the lord there, together with the expense of one horse and groom for the carrying 8*s.*

And in expenses of the said receiver of two grooms, two horses and their attendants, for £151 to be carried from Chirk to Wygemor and to be delivered to the lord Davit de Presthemede 3*s.* 6*d.*

Total 21*s.* 10*d.*

Expenses of the lord's dogs.

Item the same renders account in expense of the lord's wolf-hound and her eight puppies, the account beginning from the feast of St. Michael to the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle next following, 12*s.* by tallage against Nicholas the forester. And in expense of the aforesaid hound after delivering her puppies into the country, from the said feast of St. Andrew the Apostle up to the feast of St. Michael 10*s.* by tallage against the aforesaid Nicholas.

Total 22*s.*

Item the same renders account in expenses of 9 sparrow-hawks of the lord kept . . . at Chirk after the taking of them, from Tuesday next before the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist up to Tuesday next after the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, for five weeks 3*s.* by tallage against Nicholas the forester. Expenses of the lord's sparrow-hawks.

And in expense of two attendants carrying the said sparrow-hawks from Chirk to Bergeveny for 7 days going and returning 2*s.* 8*d.* by the same tallage.

And in chickens bought for them by the way 9*d.* by the same tallage. Chickens for my lord's sparrow-hawks.

Total 6*s.* 5*d.*

And in wages of the receiver for the same time to wit for the year £5. 6*s.* 5½*d.*, taken by the day 3½*d.* Wages.

And in wages of the porter of the Castle for the same time 60*s.* 10*d.*, taken by the day 2*d.*

And in wages of one park-keeper for the same time 30*s.* 5*d.*, taken by the day 1*d.*

And in salary of one Chaplain for celebrating in the Castle for the year 53*s.* 4*d.*

And in salary of Howel ap Thomas interpreter of the lord in the parts of Chirk 20*s.* by the year.

Total £13. 11*s.* 0½*d.*

And so the receiver owes the lord £84. 6*s.* 4*d.*, of which there is respited to him £22. 16*s.* 9¾*d.* of three forests and three meads for the two preceding years and the present year, because the steward witnesses that the lord granted to his tenants respite of the aforesaid payment. . . .

And he prays allowance of 33*s.* 1½*d.* for treth mark of land of Cecil de la Chaumbre, Abbot of Hagmon, and of

divers tenements which are in the lord's hands from the time when he was receiver of Osewaldestre. . . .

And of 26*s.* 8*d.* of farm of two mills of Wenne of which the receiver was charged less, and this from the time of the Earl of Arundel. And there is allowed by the lord £17. 7*s.* 8*d.* of the wages of Nicholas the forester, for the time covered by this account and the two preceding ones, to wit for one thousand and forty three days, taken by the day 4*d.*" [1]

[The following portion of estate accounts belongs to the same year.]

1329-30. Carpentry.

"The same renders account in wages of Ieuan Saer, carpenter, for the repair of two penthouses above the hall of Chirk 5*s.* at a fixed sum by tally against Nicholas the forester.

And in carriage of timber for the same work 8*d.* by the same tally.

And in nails bought for the same 4*d.*

Carpentry for the lord's room.

The same renders account in wages of the said Ieuan Saer, Carpenter, for 9 weeks and 3 days in repair of the carpentry of the lord's room in the Castle and for making two new windlasses [?] in the same Castle 12*s.* 7*d.*, taken by the week 16*d.*

Divers other carpenters employed in the same work at 16*d.* a day.

[1] *Exchequer Accounts*, Q.R. $\frac{485}{18}$. This MS. (in the Record Office) is only dated "iii Edward," *i.e.*, "third year of Edward." A comparison of its contents, and especially of the names of persons contained in it, with the contents of other documents which are fully dated, establishes it as belonging to the third year of Edward III, *i.e.*, 1329-30.

In carriage of timber from Kevencoyd up to the Castle 4*s.* 4*d.*

The same renders account in wages of William le Gardener for repair of the chief fish pond by the task 10*s.* Cost of the fishery.

And in carriage of brushwood for the same work 20*d.*

And in making anew the enclosure to the same 3*d.*

The same renders account in two mill stones bought for the lower mill of Wenne 10*s.*, by view of Nicholas the Forester and by tally against the same. And in one mill-stone bought for the upper mill issuing from Trevor, 2*s.* by the same tally. And in repair of the tools ['ferramentum'] of the said Mills for the year 10*d.*, from the lord's iron by the same tally.

Total 12*s.* 10*d.*"[1]

During the interval between the execution of Edmund, Earl of Arundel, and the fall of Mortimer, Earl of March (in 1330), the Chirk lands seem to have been in the hands of the latter. His possession is alluded to in a petition of the Chirk tenants in 1330. It is also implied in the following portion of a survey.

"*Certificate* of Roger Corbet, Nicholas de Acton and Thomas de Hompton assigned by commission of the King in North Wales to survey the Castles and Manors which were Roger de Mortimer's, Earl of March, and to enquire into transgressions, etc., there.

Dues of the lordships of the Castle of Chirk surveyed

[1] Ministers' Accounts, No. 1234. This MS. is undated, but internal evidence proves it to be a portion of the account which here precedes it.

by Richard de Coggeshale, receiver there [from various people, named] from the time of the Earl of March to Michaelmas, 4 Edw. III £33 5*s.*

Dues there after Michaelmas from various people [named] £117. 17*s.* 10¾*d.*

Further foreign dues 100 marcs,

which were given into the custody of Nicholas the Forester, reeve of Lord Roger de Mortimer the uncle, and amounted at the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, in the said 4th year to 25 marcs, and at the feast of St. Oswald following to 25 marcs and in the following year to 50 marcs.

Farm of the demesne lands with the mill and certain rents of the lordship are yearly £195 4*s.* 9¾*d.*

as appears by the Compotus Roll of the lordship in the 2nd and 3rd year of Edw. III.

Proceeds of wheat to Michaelmas		£20. 15*s.*
„	oats „	£1. 2*s.* 8*d.*
„	pigs called Hoggogereth to St. Martin's	£2. 1*s.* 9*d.*
Profits of pasture and agistament		13*s.* 4*d.*
Pleas and perquisites of the lord		£100.

Accusation concerning malefactors in parks and chases and elsewhere in the lordship, made by sworn ministers of the said lordship, which is worth as much as the indictment of twelve jurors together with the inquisition taken by the oath of twenty-four jurors of the said lordship, sewn to this roll at the head of this parcel." [1]

Another MS. is extant which seems to be a small portion of a survey of 1330. It appears to allude to an

[1] Exchequer MSS., No. 36. Ancient Extents, 4-5 Edw.

account of the dues of the lordship which followed the one by Richard de Coggeshale, alluded to in the last document. It contains an incidental mention of an assault upon the castle by the Welsh. Every border castle was liable to these sudden attacks, and they account for the frequent need of repairs, mention of which so often occurs in the documents. The fragment is as follows:

"Also they have taken survey of Richard de Coggeshale, Receiver of the Castle and lordship of Chirk which belonged to the said Roger Mortimer, of the issues of the same lordship from the vigil of St. Michael, 4 Edward III, up to Monday next after the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, on which day the Welsh having rumour of the taking of the said Roger in Nottingham Castle, entered the aforesaid Castle of Chirk by force and arms. And when that view of the said Richard has been taken, there is owing £74. 11*s.* 2*d.* of the remainder of the aforesaid survey, and £12. 16*s.* 10*d.* of arrears of his account of the same lordship from the vigil of St. Michael, 3 Edward III, to the vigil of St. Michael, 4 Edward III."[1] 1330.

A local Petition of Right.

In the same year, the castle and lordship still being in the hands of the Crown, "the free tenants of Chirk" petitioned the King and his Council "concerning the encroachments of Roger Mortimer, uncle, continued by Roger Mortimer, late Earl of March, upon the rights of the said tenants." Being entirely in the dark as to the hands into which they were going to fall next, they wisely decided to get their rights defined, if possible, before their

[1] Originalia Rolls, 4 Edw. III.

new lord came into possession. The substance of the petition is embodied in the evidence given before the Inquisition. The petition was attended to with great promptitude. Attached to the original document[1] is the writ of the King to Roger de Puvelesdon[2] and Roger Carles, ordering inquisition to be made concerning the
Dec. 18, 1330. tenants' grievances. Then follows the Inquisition taken at Chirk. This document is of the greatest interest, both as supplying many details regarding tenant-rights, and land and forest taxes and customs, and also as witnessing to the sturdy independence of the tenants when their rights were infringed. The following is the full text of the Inquisition:

1331. "Inquisition taken at Chirk: Friday after the feast of St. Ambrose, 5 Edward III (April 1331) in the presence

[1] In the Record Office.

[2] The Roger de Puvelesdon [or Pulesdon] here mentioned was probably the son of the Roger Pulesdon who was a friend and favourite of Edward I, who made him Sheriff of Anglesey and Constable of Carnarvon Castle. The elder Roger had in all probability held considerable power in the neighbourhood of Chirk, as Edward I granted Emral Hall, Worthenbury, to him some time before 1283. In 1293 we are told that "the king wanting monie, there was a great subsidie granted towards the maintenance of the warres in France, about levieng of the which there was much ado in diverse places: but especiallie the Welshmen which were never wont to be acquainted with such contributions, stormed against it: so that they took one of their own captaines named Roger de Puelesdon, who at the king's commandment gathered the saide subsidie, and hanged him with divers others, and afterwards headed the said Roger." (Powel's *Historie.*)

Emral Hall has remained in the Puleston family for over six hundred years. The family name appears in the earliest documents as Pyvelesdon, Puvelesdon, or Puelesdon, which develops into Pulesdon and then Puleston.

of Roger de Puvelesdon and Roger Carles appointed by letter patent of the King to take the said Inquisition concerning certain distraints, oppressions and injuries done to the men and tenants of the land of Chirk, as is contained in their petition at the foot of the seal of the King, sent to the said Roger and Roger by the oath of Eynon ap Meredith [and eleven others whose names are given] of the county of Merioneth. And by the oath of Howel ap Griffin [and eleven others, names given] of the land of Lannerchemrais. Who say upon their oath that there was no forest nor warren in the whole land of Chirk before the aforesaid land was given to Roger Mortimer, the Uncle, nor for twelve years after the said Roger had his seisin. And afterwards the said Roger made warren and forest in the waste lands and woods in the aforesaid land of Chirk, so that the men and tenants of the land aforesaid could not have common pastures for their animals, nor take beasts of chase in the woods aforesaid nor other profits as they were accustomed to have before the time of the aforesaid Roger. Also they say that treth forest [1] trethmuyt [2] were not exacted before the time of the said Roger, except five shillings and seven pence which ought to be paid by right in the name of trethmuyt, but now they pay six pounds fourteen shillings and five pence.

[1] Treth forest, forest tax.

[2] "Treth muyt" denotes the custom known as "mut," described in Eyton's *History of Shropshire* as prevailing in the Welshery of Oswestry lordship, and payable by the men of Shotover in time of war for keeping their cattle at Oswestry. "'Mut' or 'muyt' has apparent connection with the word 'mudo,' to remove, and would indicate the fee paid for the removal of the tenants' cattle in war time from the woods to a safer place." (*Ancient Tenures of Land in North Wales and the Marches*, A. E. Palmer and Edward Owen.)

Also they say that the said Roger in his time began to take heriot [1] and leyrwyths [2] from tenants of his free tenants unjustly — before which time they were not accustomed to give. Also they say that all free tenants were accustomed to have their mills upheld on their own grounds without any rent thereof being paid to the lord before the time of the said Roger: but the said Roger in his time, almost after twelve years, by distraints made the aforesaid tenants pay to him a certain rent annually, to wit, seven pounds for the aforesaid mills unjustly.

Also they say that no pannage was given to the lord before the time of the aforesaid Roger; but the said Roger began by distraint to take pannage of his tenants unjustly. Also they say that no toll used to be taken before the time of the aforesaid Roger; but the said Roger first began to take toll of the tenants aforesaid unjustly. And after the death of the aforesaid Roger the Uncle, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, during the whole of his time continued all the aforesaid. This in-

[1] "'Heriot' is in the Saxon 'heregate,' derived from 'heræ,' army, and 'gate,' a beast, and signified originally a tribute given to the lord of the manor for his better preparation for war. It is taken now [in certain copyhold and customary freehold manors still remaining] for the beast, whether horse, ox, or cow, of which the tenant dies possessed, due and payable to the lord of the manor, and in some manors, the best goods, piece of plate, etc." (Jacob's *Law Dict.*). A curious instance of its survival to the present day appeared in the newspapers a few years ago, when a tenant resisted the claim of the lord of the manor to take a prize cob as heriot. In another case, still more remarkable, a race-horse of the value of £1,000 was claimed and the claim enforced in court.

[2] "Leyrwytht," a fine for adultery.

quisition was taken in the presence of Thomas de Clone, parson of the Church of Hopsay, keeper of the land of Chirk, who was cited according to the form of the writ. In witness whereof the Jurors aforesaid to this Inquisition have placed their seal. Dated there the day and year aforesaid."[1]

It is clear from this document that the two Roger Mortimers had violated many provisions of the Forest Charter of 1217. This statute had secured to the tenants all grazing rights, in the forests and waste lands, which they had hitherto had. From the use of the word "forest" in the complaint of the Chirk tenants, the word is evidently intended here to mean a forest which is preserved and kept for the use of the lord only. We can scarcely read this complaint without being struck by the remarkable number of rights to the free use of the land which the tenants had enjoyed before the encroachments of the two Mortimers.

In the month preceding the Inquisition, *i.e.*, in the period between the presentation of the tenants' petition and the inquiry resulting from it, the King had "by Parliamentary authority" united the lands of Chirk to the crown, and guaranteed that they should not be leased to other lords, but remain in the King's hands. He appears, however, to have considered it prudent to prepare himself a bridge in case he changed his mind, for, after recording the guarantee the Patent naively continues: "If, however, it be afterwards leased to farm by the King or his heirs and successors," the present occupiers of the farms should have the preference in the

[1] *Chancery Inq. P. M.*, 5 Edw. III, No. 92.

letting of the said farms.[1] How little this guarantee was worth is shown six years later, when the lands of Chirk are not merely "put out to farm" but are granted outright to Richard, Earl of Arundel.

From the first and second years of the King's possession there are accounts rendered by the Warden of the Castle and lordship, and by the receiver of Chirk. They throw much light on the taxes and tolls of the time, the customs of land tenure, and the wages paid. In these accounts we see the working of the system by which the landlord's rights over his tenant's labour are commuted into labour rents paid in money. This custom had become general all over England. These rents were usually low about this time. In summer they were usually 2*d.* per day, and in winter 1*d.* At harvest time, however, they were higher. The famines of the reign of Edward II raised the rates for reaping by twenty per cent., and the Plague was to raise them still higher.[2] The vague method in which some of these "works of reaping" are entered in the accounts gives us some idea of how easy it must have been for the officials to collect more than the right amount, and keep the surplus. That they did so is witnessed to by complaints in the writings of this period, about the extortion of officials and tax-gatherers.

The "small boat and passage" must have been a ferry over the Ceiriog, where the bridge now is, below the village of Chirk.

[1] Patent Rolls, 5 Edw. III.

[2] See Rogers' *Six Centuries of Work and Wages.*

Estate Account

"(Account of ———) Inge,[1] Warden of the Castle, land and honor of Chirk from 2 Dec., 5 Edward III to the feast of St. Michael next following, 6 Edward III. 1331-2.

He renders account of 9*s.* 6*d.* of rent of the vill of Chirk. And of 2*s.* 6*d.* of rent of five houses which were in the hand of Nicholas de Chirk, Forester. Rent of the term of the Annunciation.

And of 4*s.* 7*d.* of all customary tenants for reaping the corn in the autumn, namely 487 reapers. Rent of the term of the Assumption of the B.V.M.

And of 4*d.* of Crogan Ithan[2] for reaping beyond the reaping aforesaid.

And of 16*d.* of certain reaping beyond the reaping in Glyn Vaur.

And of 9*s.* 6*d.* of assise rent of the village of Chirk, at the same term. Rent at the term of St. Michael.

And of £10. 10*s.* received of farm of two mills of Wenne this year. Farms and Avowries.

And of 60*s.* of farm of one fuller's mill there, this year to farm. The fuller's mill.

And of £10 of toll of the market of Chirk this year, to farm. The market of Chirk.

Of farm of the small boat and passage there is nothing, because it is within the perquisites of the Court. The small boat and passage.

And of 18*d.* of perquisites of one Court of Chirk held this Tuesday next after the feast of St. Peter at Rome. Perquisites of the Court.

And of 12*d.* of the Court of Chirk held the same day

[1] The full name of the Warden is illegible in the MS.

[2] Correct Welsh spelling, "Crogen Iddon."

(Tuesday next before the feast of St. Mathias the Apostle).

Wages and necessary expenses.

Also in wages of one Constable for himself and for a doorkeeper by the year £10.

In wages of one receiver there, taken by the day 3½*d.*, by the year 106*s.* 2*d.*

The Interpreter.

In salary of one interpreter by the year 20*s.*

Parchment and ink.

In parchment and in ink bought for the roll, and extracts of the Court, and for writs and memoranda, etc., 6*s.* 8*d.*" [1]

In the second account, rendered the same year, the points complained of by the tenants are very prominent. The whole lordship is taxed for mill rent and forest rent.

1331-2.

"*Chirk.* Account of Thos. de Upton, Receiver there, from 2nd December, 5 Edward III to the same day 6 Edward III.

Customs and Farms.

The Mill tax.

Of 65*s.* 4*d.* of custom of free tenants of the whole lordship for Trethmelyn.[2]

Of 70*s.* of custom of men of the whole lordship which is called Trethmuyt.[3]

The forest tax.

Of £4 of their custom called Treth Forest.[4]

[1] Ministers' Accounts, $\frac{1234}{2}$.

[2] "'Treth melyn,' properly 'treth melin,' or mill tax, due to the lord for work at his mill, for not grinding there, and for not turning water to it" (A. N. Palmer, *Two Charters of Henry VII* in *Y Cymmrodor*, 1906).

[3] See p. 57, note 2.

[4] Forest tax.

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

ADAM'S TOWER, CHIRK CASTLE

CONTAINING UNDERGROUND DUNGEON

Of 14*s.* of farm of 5 burgages in Chirk charged beyond the 5*s.* of fixed rent.

Perquisites of Court.

And of £50. 0*s.* 2*d.* of perquisites of Court, and of £6. 18*s.* 5*d.* of fees of the steward.

Necessary Expenses.

In expenses of the steward holding the Court this year £15. 18*s.* 8*d.*; in fees of the Constable, Receiver and Doorkeeper £10.

Account of Thomas de Upton, Receiver of Chirk.

From 2nd December 6 Edward III to Easter 7 Edward III.

Received of fines, reliefs, pleas and perquisites of Court for the same time £49. 6*s.*"

In the years 1329, 1330, and 1331 the name of Nicholas the Forester, or "Nicholas of Chirk," as he is often called, figures largely in the various documents. He appears to have practically managed the estates in these years. In 1331 a charge is brought against him and others of having taken part in one of those cattle-lifting raids that are so characteristic of border counties. Whether the court convicted him and his companions does not appear, but a record in this year of the appointment of John ap Gruffyth "to the custody of the forest of Chirk"[1] would seem to point to his having been convicted and removed from his office. The following is the charge:

"Commission of oyer and terminer[2] to William de

[1] Patent Roll, 5 Edw. III.

[2] "Oyer and terminer" (Fr., to hear and determine) is a com-

Botiller of Wemme, Henry de Hambury, Roger Hilary and Roger Carles, on complaint by Fulk Fitz Waryn that William de Hulle, Waryn de Rugge, Nicholas de Chirke, Richard Madoc, Richard de Honerwode, Howel ap Thomas and others, at Whytynton[1] in the March of Wales took away 5 horses, 100 mares, 100 colts, 48 oxen, 40 bullocks, 40 cows, 40 heifers, 500 sheep, and 100 swine of his, worth £1,000. Also broke his park, hunted there, carried away deer, cut down his trees, fished his stews, and carried away the fish and timber."[2]

A cattle raid.

By the year 1334 Richard, Earl of Arundel, had been granted possession of his father's estates in Chirkland, forfeited on Edmund's execution by Queen Isabella. That he was in possession in 1334 is proved by the date of the charter, in which he confirms certain rights granted to the free tenants by his father Edmund. In view of this fact it is curious that the Patent Roll confirming this grant is dated three years later. The lands are granted to him "with knight's fees, and advowsons, royalties, royal liberties, free customs, hundreds, fairs, markets, forests, chaces, parks, woods, warrens, and other appurtenances, notwithstanding a previous grant that the men and tenants should remain annexed to the crown for ever."[3]

A Charter to the Free Tenants.

In 1334 Richard granted a charter to his tenants. In it he confirms to his commons of the land of the district

mission to two of the judges of the circuit, and other gentlemen of the county, by virtue of which they have power to "hear and determine" certain specified offences.

[1] Whittington. [2] Patent Roll, 5 Edw. III.

[3] *Ibid.*, 2 Edw. III (28 Aug. 1337).

of Chirk "all the privileges and liberty and profit they have been accustomed to . . . preserving to us and to our heirs for all time timber for building and brushwood for our own necessary use." The charter continues: "And moreover we have granted for ourselves and our heirs to the same commons and to their heirs that there should be neither claim nor retribution against them because of the land that they have taken or their forefathers out of our waste land within the lordship of Chirk, without our permission; while maintaining us harmless for everything that has been done within the bounds of our forests." The charter further provided that the free tenants of Chirkland might hunt, kill, and take bucks, hares, and foxes throughout all the lands of the lordship except in the places "anciently reserved by the lords of Wales," except also in parks made by Roger Mortimer, and in four forests (named). They might have through the forests, wood to repair their houses, firewood, pannage (pasturing in the woods) for their swine, and honey in all woods except those mentioned as reserved. They were not to pay forest tax nor any other except an old one paid in the time of the "lords of Wales." They were also to have common pasture for all their cattle at all times of the year.[1]

The result of all this is a compromise. Certain grazing rights are secured to the tenants; the forest tax and others are abolished; the right to hunt over certain parts

[1] From a Welsh copy of the Latin original in the Cae Cyriog MSS., quoted by A. N. Palmer in his *Tenure of Land in the Marches of Wales*. Also in Puleston MSS.: Inspeximus in French by Richard, Earl of Arundel, of a charter by Edmund his father dated 18 Edw. II.

of the estate is secured. On the other hand "the parks made by Roger Mortimer" and four forests are preserved for the lord's exclusive use. To balance this to some extent, the tenants who have enclosed land out of the waste are to be left in possession. Whether this last item amounted to benefiting certain tenants at the expense of the common weal is impossible to say at this distance of time. Possibly all the tenants had annexed waste land.

Up to this point the charter merely recited and confirmed the earlier one granted by Edmund. It then continued as follows:

"And we the aforesaid Richard have released, and for us and our heirs for ever have pardoned, our free tenants of our said land of Chirk and their heirs one treth [tax] which is called Trethmelyn [the mill tax] with which treth they were charged for their mills built and raised on their demesne soil before his time, that is to say twenty-two shillings and eight pence of silver of Trethmelyn in Nantheudo of the free tenants there, and twenty shillings and sixpence . . . in Kentleth . . . and twenty-two shillings and two pence . . . in Moghnant." So far this sounds like a free remission of the tax. But the next clause dispels the illusion. "And for this gift, grant, and confirmation our said tenants agree to pay to us one thousand six hundred marks of silver. This charter is given at our Castle of Chirk, Wednesday after the Feast of St. Luke, 8 Edward III." [1]

The repeated forfeitures and reinstatements of the Arundel and Mortimer families make the documents re-

[1] Puleston MSS.: Inspeximus in French by Richard, Earl of Arundel, of a Charter by Edmund his father dated 18 Edw. II.

lating to Chirk rather complicated reading. In the year 1354 a peculiar situation arose out of the varying fortunes of these families. The Arundels were in possession. At the same time the Mortimer of the day was applying for a reversement of the former judgement against his predecessor. The judgement, if reversed, would imply reinstatement of the Mortimers in possession of the Chirk lands. The Arundels, however, were too powerful for this to be attempted, and so Roger Mortimer, lord of Wigmore, gives a guarantee that he resigns all claim to the Chirk estates. For this guarantee Arundel pays £5,000. A qualifying clause is inserted, to the effect that if the King or Roger shall make "due compensation" to Arundel "within two years after the said reversement of judgment" (against the Mortimers) the grant to the Arundels shall be null.[1]

These two documents might be thought to have settled the question. Five years later the matter is finally settled by a document in which there are no qualifying clauses of any kind. It is a "release by John Mortimer, son of

[1] Indenture in French, 28 Edw. III; also Indenture 20 March, 28 Edw. III. Harleian MSS., Liber Nigel de Wigmore. The wording of the second of these is as follows: "The King supposing the castle-land and service of Chirk with all appurtenances belonged to him by the forfeiture of Roger de Mortimer, formerly Earl of March, has given and granted the same to Richard, Earl of Arundel, and his heirs for ever, as appears by charter to the said Earl of Arundel. Roger Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore, cousin and heir of the said Earl of March, being in process for reversement of the said judgment against the said Earl of March, has made a release or guarantee to the said Earl of Arundel of all his right to the said castle, lands and services of Chirk, on condition that the King or Roger making compensation to the said Earl within two years after the said reversement of judgment, the said grant shall be null."

John Mortimer, to Richard Earl of Arundel and his heirs," of "all his right in the Castle and lordship of Chirk in Wales."[1]

From the date of this release for a period of nearly forty years no records of Chirk seem to have been preserved. During this time Richard Fitz Alan (the second), Earl of Arundel, had died and his son (Richard Fitz Alan the third) had succeeded to the Chirk estates. In the spring of 1397 he forfeited his land to the Crown and was executed.

Various accounts have been preserved of the revenues of Chirk for this year 1397, again supplying interesting items regarding wages and containing references to other castles in the neighbourhood.

"The account of Robert Parys, Chamberlain of Chester and Chamberlain and Receiver of all issues and profits of the King's lordship of Bromfield, Yale, Chirk, Chirkland, Osewastre, Osewastre Hundred, with eleven walled towns and the Castle of Shrawardyn with lands and lordship annexed. Of all payments and expenses from 20 April, 21 Richard II, to Michaelmas, 22 Richard II.

Wages and fees of Ministers.

To Peter de Dutton, Constable of the Castle of Chirk, for his fee of 3*d.* a day from 2nd of October, 21 Richard II, to Michaelmas. £4. 10*s.* 6*d.*

In fee of the clerk of the Court rolls of the lordships of Oswastre and Chirk from Michaelmas, 21 Richard II, to the following Michaelmas, 40*s.*

Wages of men at arms and archers dwelling within the castle for the defence of the same.

To Urianus de Eggerton, late warden of the Castle of Chirke, by commission of Sir John de Stanley, Knt.,

[1] Harleian MSS., Liber Nigel de Wigmore, dated Tuesday after St. Gregory, 28 Edw. III.

that castle having been delivered to him by the King, being in the said castle for the defence and safe keeping of the same with six archers in his company, from 22 Aug., 21 Richard II, to 2nd November, namely for 72 days for his own wages at 12*d.* a day and the wages of the six archers at 6*d.* a day £14. 8*s.*

Wages of plumbers and carpenters.

Paid to divers plumbers, carpenters and other workmen working upon the repair of the defects of the castle of Chirk and for tin for plumbers to work at 13*s.* 8*d.*"[1]

In the same year there is a grant to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, of the office of Justice of Holt Castle, Castra Leoni, Bromfield, Yale, and of Chirk Castle with its demesnes for life. For this office he receives £100.

Various other appointments of this year are mentioned in the records. Peter de Dutton is appointed constable of the Castle of Chirk; Richard Fitton of Pownall appointed as woodward and under-forester of one of the commotes of Chirkland, and John Vane forester of Chirkland.[2]

In November an Inquisition is taken at Chirk into the revenues of the lordship, and into the goods and chattels found in the Castle. The commission of four appointed by the King report that "the Castle and lordship with its customs is worth in all its issues beyond the fees of the steward, constable, and porter, and all other officers there, £413. 6*s.* 8*d.*"

They then proceed to give an amusing inventory of the "goods and chattels" found within the Castle—from which comically meagre list of the possessions of a great

[1] Ministers' Accounts $\frac{1234}{7}$.

[2] Welsh Records, Cal. Recog. Rolls of Palatinate of Chester from earliest period to the end of the reign of Henry IV.

lord we may safely conclude either that the Earl's heirs or his retainers had taken good care to remove all articles of value before the Commission appeared upon the scene. The following is the inventory:

" The said Earl of Arundel had within the Castle the 18th July last past and afterwards the following goods and chattels:

Inventory of goods found in Chirk Castle.

{divers bows of yew and holm
parcel of 2 springalds
arrows and cross bows} of no value.

1 Bell.
1 little bell.
1 old vestment of white fustian.
1 altar cloth.
1 Paxbread.
part of an old Missal.
1 Chalice.
2 cruets, 2 mortars.
1 Lead vessel in the oven.
5 pairs of gyves.
10 lances whereof 5 without heads.
20 locks with keys of the same.

These arms, goods, and chattels are left in charge of John ap William, lieutenant of Peter de Dutton, Constable of the Castle, for the garrison there.

The Earl likewise had within the said Castle many other arms and artillery late left in charge of John Wethales, late Constable there, and of John ap William, late his lieutenant, but the jurors are ignorant as to what they were and their value.

The said Earl also had within the Castle aforesaid the 18th July and afterwards the following goods and chattels:

3 lead vessels, price of each 6*s.* 8*d.*—20*s.*
1 lead vessel, price 3*s.* 4*d.*
1 lead vessel, price 2*s.*
1 basin, price 20*d.*
2 brass jars whereof one is broken—6*s.* 8*d.*
1 chain of iron, price 12*d.*
{1 old chest / 1 "knedyngtrogh" [kneading-trough] / ½ chest} price altogether 2*s.*
1 alb, 1 amice, 1 chasuble, 1 stole, 1 banner(?)—price altogether 10*s.*

The arrears of farms and rents of the castle and lordship aforesaid up to the Vigil of St. Michael last past, which extends by estimation to £200, are in the hands of divers tenants, bailiffs, reeves, and other ministers there who are responsible to the King. The rents and farms there of the term of St. Michael last past, which extends by estimation to £90, are in the hands of tenants there, and Hugh Knottesford, whom Sir William Bagot, Knt., appointed receiver there, is responsible to the King for the same."[1]

In the following year the Chirk lands were restored to Thomas, Earl of Arundel, whose father had been executed. Possibly they were not granted outright this year, as an account of this date describes the Earl as 1398.

[1] *Chanc. Inq. P. M.*, 21 Rich. II, No. 137, Bundle of Forfeitures.

"farmer of the [Lord King] there."[1] Probably the estates were granted to him outright in the following year, on the accession of Henry IV.[2] The account above mentioned throws light on the extraordinary number of points at which the tenants were taxed.

The popular songs of the fourteenth century are full of the people's sense of grievance at the countless exactions to which they have to submit. The reign of Edward II seems to have been specially rich in such songs, and although the two following reigns (and more particularly the effects of the Black Death) brought some improvement in the condition of those who worked the land, yet the Chirk accounts of 1398 prove that the "bailiff" and the "reeve" must have held much the same place in the people's thoughts at the end of the century as they did at its opening. The popular feeling is nowhere better expressed than in the *Song of the Husbandman*, of which the following is a prose translation:

The Song of the Husbandman.

"I[3] heard men on the earth make much lamentation, how they are injured in their tillage, good years and corn are both gone, they keep here no saying and sing no

[1] The words between brackets are conjectural, as the document is illegible at this point. But the conjecture seems the only reasonable one, as there was no one else for whom the Earl would be likely to "farm"; and as we know that in the previous year the "tenants, bailiffs, reeves," etc., were "responsible to the King."

[2] See Thos. Fitz Alan, Earl of Arundel, *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

Original.

[3] "Ich herde men upo mold make muche mon
Hou he beth i-tened of here tilyynge,
Gode yeres and corn both beth y-gon,
He kepeth here no sawe ne no song syng.

song.[1] Now we must work, there is no other custom, I can no longer live with my gleaning; yet there is a bitterer asking for the boon, for ever the fourth penny must go to the King. It is grievous to lose where there is little, and we have many fellows who expect it; the hayward commandeth us harm to have of his; the bailiff causeth us to know evil, and thinks to do well; the woodward has woe in keeping for us, who looketh under branches; there may not arise to us or remain with us riches or repose. Thus they rob the poor man who is of little value; he must needs in sweat and in labour waste away so . . . still there come beadles, with very great boast: 'Prepare me silver for the green wax; thou art entered in my writing, that thou knowest well of.' More than ten times I paid my tax. Then must I have hens roasted, fair on the fish day lamprey and salmon; forth to the market gains not cost, though I sell my bill and

The Song of the Husbandman.

[1] "Now we mote worche, nis ther non other won, Original.
Mai ich no longore lyve with my lesinge;
Yet ther is a bitterore bid to the bon,
For ever the furthe peni mot to the Kynge.
Luther is to leosen there ase lutel ys,
And haveth monie hynen that hopieth thereto;
The hayward heteth us harm to habben of his;
The bailif bockneth us bale and weneth wel do;
The wodeward waiteth us wo that loketh under rys;
Ne may us ryse no rest rycheis ne ro.
* * * * * * *
Yet cometh budeles, with ful muche bost,
'Grethe me silver to the grene wax:
Thou art writen y my writ that thou wost.'
Thenne mot ych habbe hennen a-rost,
Feyr on fyhshe day launprey ant lax;
Forth to the chepyn geyneth ne chost,
Thah y sulle mi bil and my borstax."

The Song of the Husbandman.

my[1] borstax. I must lay my pledge well if I will, or sell my corn while it is but green grass. Yet shall I be a foul churl though they have the whole; what I have saved all the year I must spend then. I must needs spend what I saved formerly, I must thus take care gainst the time these catchpoles come; the master beadle comes as roughly as a boar, he says he will make my lodgings full bare; I give him for meed a mark or more, though I sell my mare at the day fixed. There the green wax grieveth us under garment, so that they hunt us as a hound doth the hare. Thus I take and catch cares full cold, since I reckoning and cot had to keep; to seek silver for the King I sold my seed, wherefore my land lies fallow and learneth to sleep. Since they fetched my fair cattle in my fold, when I think of my weal I very nearly weep; thus breed many bold beggars and our rye

Original.

[1] "Ich mot legge my wed wel yef y wolle,
Other sulle mi corn on gras that is grene,
Yet I shall be foul cherl, thah he han the fulle,
That ich alle yer spare thenne y mot spene.
Nede y mot spene that y spared yore,
Ayeyn this cachereles cometh thus y mot care;
Cometh the maister budel brust ase a bore,
Saith he wole me bugging bringe ful bare,
Mede y mot munten a mark other more,
Thah ich at the set dey sulle mi mare.
Ther the grene wax greveth under gore,
That me us honteth ase hound doth the hare.
Thus y kippe ant cacche cares ful colde,
Seththe y counte ant cot hade to kepe;
To seche selver to the kyng y mi seed solde,
Forthi mi lond leye lith ant leorneth to slepe.
Seththe he mi feire feh fatte y my folde
When y thenk o mi weole wel neh y wepe;
Thus bredeth monie beggares bolde,

The Song of the Husbandman.

is rotted and [ruls?] before we reap, [ruls] is our rye and rotted in the straw, on account of the bad weather by brook and brink. There wakes in the world consternation and woe, as good is to perish at once as so to labour." [1]

A pathetic belief appears to have existed in the minds of the poor men of these days that if the King knew how they were oppressed he would alter things at once. They put the blame for their wrongs on the shoulders of their lords, or, oftener still, on the backs of officialdom. When we think of such a King as Edward II, surrounded by his favourites and living a life of costly pleasure-seeking, this belief, coming from the mouths of his unlucky subjects, has all the sadness of unconscious irony.

The poem continues:

"Ac if the king hit wiste, I trowe he woulde be wroth,
Hou the pore beth i-piled [2] and hou the silver goth;
Hit is so deskatered [3] bothe hider and thidere,
That halvendel shal ben stole ar hit come togidere, and accounted;
And if a pore man speke a word, he shal be foule afrounted." [4]

This belief was no doubt the outcome of Edward I's genuine love for justice and good laws, and probably survived in out-of-the-way places through the reigns of

[1] "And ure ruye ys roted ant [ruls] er we repe
[Ruls] ys oure ruye ant roted in the stre,
For wickede wederes by brok ant by bryake
Ther wakeneth in the world woudred and wee,
Ase good is swynden anon as so for te swynke." Original.

[2] "I-piled," robbed. [3] "Deskatered," scattered about.

[4] Poem on *The Evil Times of Edward II.* From the Auchinleck MS. fol. in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. Pub. in *Political Songs of England, from John to Edw. II*, ed. and trans. T. Wright.

some of his unworthy successors. That the belief was much more promptly expelled in the minds of those who were enabled to watch Edward II's career at close quarters is shown in another song of his reign—*On the King's breaking his confirmation of Magna Carta.* The following is a prose translation of the first verse:

A person may make and unmake,
It is what he too often does;
It is neither well nor fair;
On account of it England is ruined.
Our prince of England,
By the counsel of his people,
At Westminster after the fair
Made a great parliament.
The Charter he made of wax,
So I understand, and I readily believe it,
It was held too near the fire,
And is all melted away.

Although at least seventy years had passed between the writing of these songs and the date of the following account, it is plain that, at any rate in some parts of the country, the people still groaned under an incredible number of taxes.

Chirkland. 1398-1399. "The account of . . . Bailiffs . . . of Thomas, Earl of Arundel and Surrey, Farmer of the [Lord King?] there, from the vigil of the feast of St. Michael, 23 Richard II, to the same vigil, 1 Henry IV.

Glyn. The account of David ap Ith' and David ap Hoell, Bailiffs there from the time aforesaid.

Rents. Of 75*s.* 4*d.* of rent of the mill of Glynvaur at the

term of St. Michael. And of 2*s.* of increase of rent of the same mill.

And of 10*s.* of rent of the mill of Crogen [1] at the same term.

Of 12*d.* of rent of Geskyn [2] at the same term.

Of 38*s.* 11*d.* of their purparty of £4. 10*s.* 11*d.* of trethtithio [3] there at the term of all Saints.

Of 13*s.* 4*d.* of tong [4] at the feast of Christmas of their purparty of 36*s.*

Of 53*s.* 2*d.* of kielgh [5] of the lord's horses there at the same term of their purparty of 100*s.* Quartering of the lord's horses.

And of 3*s.* 6*d.* of 42 chickens there. 42 chickens.

And of 7*s.* 9½*d.* of mairgaiaf [6] there at the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Of 25*s.* 8*d.* of kielgh of the horses of the Lord's Steward and his grooms.

[1] The little group of houses where this mill stood is still called "Castle Mill." This entry supplies a valuable item of evidence in the identification of the site of the Castle of Crogen.

[2] I have not been able to ascertain what this tax was.

[3] Tithes.

[4] "Tong" = twnc, tunk, "a rent or tribute payable by each kindred holding a 'gwely' or tribal holding, and fixed ultimately upon the land" (A. N. Palmer).

[5] "Kielgh" = cylch, a circuit or progress. Originally this meant a quartering of certain officials or followers of the lord—and also a quartering of his horses, dogs, etc.—for a certain period on his tenants. Subsequently this was commuted into a money tax as in the entry above. See Palmer and Owen's *History of Ancient Tenures, etc.*, p. 136.

[6] "Mairgaiaf," properly "maer gauaf." "Treth maer gauaf: the due payable to the *winter mayor*, but what the functions of the winter mayor were I do not know" (A. N. Palmer, *Two Charters, etc.*, as before quoted).

The hearth tax.

Of 15*s.* 7½*d.* of treth taan[1] there at the term of the Annunciation.

The cheese-house tax.

Of 41*s.* 8*d.* of treth causty[2] there at the term of the Apostles Philip and James.

The barn tax.

And of 10*s.* 4*d.* of treth scubore[3] at the term of the Nativity of St. John Baptist.

Of 23*s.* 3*d.* of works of reaping there at the feast of St. Oswald.

The lord's "little lads."

Of 22*s.* 3*d.* of treth weission bach[4] there at the same term.

The otter dogs.

Of 6*s.* 10*d.* of treth donergon[5] there.

Sale of corn.

Of £9. 0*s.* 10*d.* the price of 27 quarters and 1 bushel of corn and oat-meal flour, of rent there, at the term of All Saints. Price of a bushel this year 10*d.*

Of 7*s.* 3*d.* the price of 3 quarters 5 bushels of oats, of rent there, at the feast of the Apostle Philip and James. Price of a bushel this year 3*d.*

Of 60*s.* of farm of fees of heriots[6] and avowries[7] of

[1] "Treth taan," properly "tân" (sometimes written "dan"), fire or hearth tax.

[2] "Treth causty," properly "cawsdy," or "gawsdy," the cheese house tax, in respect of using the lord's cheese house.

[3] "Treth scubore," properly "ysgubor," the barn tax, due for the use of the lord's barn.

[4] "Treth weission bach," properly "treth gweision bychain," a tax in commutation of the "cylch" or progress which the "little lads," or young retainers, of the lord were accustomed to make.

[5] "Treth donergon," properly "dwrgwn," otter dogs. A tax for the upkeep of the lord's otter hounds. (When no other source is given, the above meanings are the result of Mr. A. N. Palmer's original investigations as given in *Two Charters of Henry VII*, in *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xix.)

[6] See p. 58.

[7] "Avowry," a distress taken for rent or other thing.

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

CHIRK CASTLE FROM THE EAST

the whole lordship of Nantheudo, so leased this year as appears in the bailiffs' lease.

Of £4 of the tenants of Glyn of their purparty of £8 for turning the water to the lord's mill. Water for the lord's mill.

Of 57*s.* 4*d.* of heriot of Nantheudo this year, as appears in the Court Roll.

Of 13*s.* 4*d.* of their purparty of 26*s.* 8*d.* of farm of the Chapel of Chirk, let to the tenants of the country for the Court to be held there at the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary." The Chapel of Chirk.

[Reference is also made to the Bailiff's fees called "kielgh," obtained from any house of a serf, and from "fines and amercements." Also of the Steward's fees "from fines and amercements."]

"Of 23*s.* 9*d.* of pleas and perquisites of two turns[1] and of all courts there this year. Perquisites of the Court.

Of 20*s.* of Steward's fee thereof contingent and reserved to the lord this year.

Delivered to the aforesaid Thomas, Receiver there, by the bailiffs there, of the issue of one term £6. Expenses delivered in money.

[1] "'Turn' is the King's Leet through all the county of which the Sheriff is Judge, and this Court is incident to his office; wherefore it is called the Sheriff's 'Tourn.' The name is derived from the Sheriff taking a turn or circuit about the Shire, holding his Court in different places. The Turn is a Court of Record, and by the Common Law the Sheriff ought to make his Turn throughout all the Hundreds in his county in order to hold a Court in every Hundred for the redress of grievances and preservation of peace. . . . By Magna Carta it was enacted that no Sheriff was to make his Turn through a Hundred except twice a year. This was to prevent the Sheriffs from oppressing the people by holding the Court at times and places where they could not attend, by which means he increased his amercements." (Jacob's *Law Dictionary.*)

Chirk Town. The Account of Jollin ap Ieuan and [name illegible] ap Hona ap Willym, bailiffs there.

Rents and farms. Of 24*s.* rent of the town there at the term of St. Mark for the whole year.

Of £18 of farm of the toll there at the terms of the Annunciation and St. Oswald.

There is nothing rendered here of 40*s.* of farm of the new hall and 12 shops there at the same term, because it is below. But they render account of 6*s.* 2*d.* of perquisites of the Court of the town aforesaid this year.

The cellar under the Chapel. Of 12*d.* of farm of the cellar under the Chapel there, by the year, at the customary terms.

Of £24 of farm of the toll of the town aforesaid and of the country of Nantheudo, with 2 parts of all forfeitures of toll aforesaid carried away or concealed, and of all penalties incurred by any for not making customary suit at the market of the town as they were accustomed to make in the time of Earls Edmund and Richard, late lords of the lordships aforesaid, together

The new hall. with rent of the new hall there, so leased this year to Eignus ap David and Llywelyn ap Ath, as appears in the roll of the Bailiff's lease, and they render paid £26 by the year.

Account of Ieuan Vachuan ap Ieuan Gethan, chief Forester, Hona ap Jankin and [name illegible], Woodwards there, render account of £4. 14*s.* 9*d.* of perquisites

The Forest Court. and attachments of the Forest Court there this year with fees thereof contingent.

Of 40*s.* of farm of their bailiwick.

Of farm of the new close[1] of Carraunt which has

[1] Evidently a recent addition to the parkland of the lordship. In another document it is called "the new park of Carraunt."

hitherto been let to farm for £6. 13*s.* 4*d.* by the year they render nothing now, because the enclosure of the same is annulled, and the said close lies in the whole unenclosed part.

Of agistament [1] of animals in the forest there they render nothing this year.

Of turf sold within the forest there are no tithes deducted here, because the sale of turf is among the attachments.

No wood blown down by the wind was sold." [2]

[1] "Agistament," the right of pasturage, and the sum paid for this right. See Palmer and Owen, p. 89.

[2] Ministers' Accounts $\frac{1234}{9}$.

IN the following year came the great rising of all Wales under Owain Glyndwr. The fiery and independent spirit of the Welsh people, apparently crushed and conquered time after time by the stronger among the English kings, only waited its opportunity to make a fresh stand for freedom. The internal dissensions in the English kingdom in 1400 afforded one of these opportunities, and in the person of Glyndwr Wales was ready with a leader great enough to seize the opportunity. He won victory after victory until nearly all Wales declared for him, and it is probable that had the internal troubles in England continued, Owain would have been master of all Wales. Peace, however, was restored for a time among the unruly English nobles, and the Prince of Wales (afterwards Henry V) reconquered Wales in the course of four years' campaigns.

No one who has the most superficial acquaintance with the ancient laws of the Welsh people can wonder at their resistance to the English conquest. Over and above the natural objection of a high-spirited people to being governed by a different race, we have to take into account that they possessed a code of laws of very great antiquity, minutely regulating almost every relation of life. Their tenure of land was wholly different from that of their conquerors—not to mention the fact that their conquerors

usually left them little enough land to hold under any tenure, old or new. "Ye said Lords Marchers were bound by laws of England always to keep their Castles with sufficient men and munition for ye keeping of the King's enemies in that lordship or county in subjection, if they offered any attempts or riotts, as oftentimes they did. The said Lords Marchers being English lords, executed ye English lawes for the most part within their lordship, and brought ye most part of ye lands of ye said lordship to be English tenure, and passed ye same according to ye lawes of England."

But we come to the real heart of the matter in the ironical words with which the chronicler continues: "Such parts as they [the English conquerors] left to ye ancient inhabitants of ye country to possess, being for ye most part ye barrenest soiles, was permitted by some lords to be holden by ye old Welsh custom." The same account tells us how "in the second year of Henry IV it was ordeyned the Lords of the Marches of Wales should send sufficient stuffing and ward in their castles to the intent that noe losse, ryott, or danger should come to ye King or to his realme by their tenants or other Welshman."[1]

Welshmen were prohibited by law from buying land or holding office in any English town or borough. The law went still further in shutting out the Welsh from educational advantages in England. The spirit and effect of these laws is summed up by another writer in the following admirable piece of criticism. "These lawes," he writes, "were not ordeined for their reformation but of meere

[1] From *A Description of the Dominion of Wales*, Harleian MSS. 141, British Museum.

purpose to worke their bitter ruin and destruction. Which doth evidently appeare in that they were forbidden to keep their children at learning, or to put them to be apprentices to anie occupation in anie towne or borough of this realme. Let anie indifferent man therefore judge and consider whether this extremitie of law, where justice itself is mere injurie and crueltie, be not a cause and matter sufficient to withdraw anie people from civilitie to barbarism."[1]

1401. In this same year a pardon is granted "at the supplication of the King's first-born son Henry, Prince of Wales," to all who have taken part in "treasons and insurrections" in the counties of Denbigh, Carnarvon, Anglesey, and Merioneth in the first year of the King's reign. On 6th May there is special mention of this pardon as applying to the King's lieges of the lordship of Thomas, Earl of Arundel, of Chirke and Chirkland in Wales.[2] That the inhabitants of Chirk must have been largely affected by the struggle between the English king and Owain Glyndwr is certain. The Earl of Arundel was himself much engaged in the campaigns against Glyndwr, and also fought with Glyndwr's ally, Hotspur, near Cader Idris. In 1402 he was given the command of one of the three divisions of an expedition against Glyndwr that started from Hereford. All three divisions of this army were compelled by weather to retreat into England—as so many previous English armies had been obliged to do. Bad weather was always an ally of the Welsh in these campaigns, as the English

[1] Powel's *Historie of Cambria.*

[2] See Owen Edwards' *Wales*, and Thomas, Earl of Arundel, in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

were quite unequal to their opponents on slippery mountain sides, and in the teeth of mountain storms and rain. The most conspicuous event of this campaign took place within twenty miles of Chirk. The Percys of Northumberland having arranged to join forces with Owain Glyndwr against the English king, marched to Shrewsbury to join the Welsh army there. Glyndwr, who was in South Wales, failed to reach Shrewsbury 1403. before the King gave battle to the Percys' army, and the result was a great victory for the English, and the death of Hotspur.

The situation of Chirk Castle—on the border, and practically commanding the Dee and Ceiriog routes into Wales—would naturally constitute it a likely scene of border warfare throughout these years. That it actually did suffer heavily we know, as the Chirk estates were said to be so devastated that when the Earl of Arundel in 1405 contemplated marrying a foreign wife, the King advanced money for him to bring the bride "with magnificence and glory" to England.[1]

Conspicuous traces of devastation are to be found in an account of the Chirk revenues, rendered sixty years later, and although these are no doubt partly the effect of the Wars of the Roses they are probably due in part to the Welsh campaign.

In the year of Henry V's death, Thomas Strange, Esq., 1422. Constable of the Castle of Chirk, is commanded to procure horses, carts, and other carriage, to take fifteen French prisoners from Chirk Castle to London.[2] French prisoners at Chirk.

[1] See Owen Edwards' *Wales*, and Thomas, Earl of Arundel, in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

[2] Patent Roll, 1 Henry VI.

This small item links the fortunes of Chirk with the great events which had been happening in France under Henry V. These fifteen French prisoners had perhaps fought on the field of Agincourt, and seen Henry leading in person that sick and half-starved handful of men, whose marvellous spirit achieved one of the greatest victories against odds of which we have any record in history.

1423. Further allusions to the French wars appear in a grant of the following year, when the Chirk lands were once more in the hands of the Crown.

"Grant by advice of the Council, to John de Radeclyf, Knight, of the counties of Caernarvon and Meryonnyth in North Wales, with all royalties, liberties, franchises, rents, services and profits to the same belonging, by the hands of the Chamberlain of North Wales, together with the lordship called the lordship of Chirk and Chirkesland, until he hath had re-payment therefrom of the £7,029. 13*s.* 1*d.* which he has shown to the King and Council to be still owing to him, after all payments by him received, for his wages of 4*s.* a day as seneschal of Aquitaine, and the wages of 200 archers at 20 marks a year, each retained with him from 1 May, 1 Henry VI to 30 June, 9 Henry VI, and for the sum of 1,000 marks a year payable to him as captain and constable of the castle of Frounsak from 16 May, 7 Henry V, until February last."[1]

1436. Thirteen years later John de Sutton, Knt., and William Burley of Bromecroft, are commissioned to receive as attorneys for the King "the attornments and attendances

[1] Patent Roll, 2 Henry VI.

of all the tenants of the lordship of Chirk and Chirkeland in the Marches of Wales, and to ask and to accept gifts to the highest value which the tenants of the lordships have been wont to give at voidances of the lordships."[1]

The lot of the Chirk tenants at this period must have been a far from enviable one. Not only were they bandied about from one lord to another, as the successive possessors of Chirkland rose or fell in the royal favour, but at each change "gifts" (gracefully so named) were "asked and accepted to the highest value which the tenants had been wont to give." Again and again Chirk is only mentioned in connection with some subsidy to be raised, or some appeal to the unlucky tenants to come to the King's aid in "his difficult circumstances." In the year 1437. following the enforced "gifts," William Beauchamp, Chamberlain of North Wales, and others, are commissioned to raise a subsidy for the King's use in Anglesey, Flint, Chirke, and Chirkelandys, Harwardyn and Mohandesdale in North Wales[2] and "to induce the commonalties, men, and tenants of the lordship of Chirke and Chirkeland, which Katherine, late Queen of England, held in dower, to grant to the King in his difficult circumstances certain gifts, aids or subsidies, as the custom has been hitherto."[3] This subsidy would be for the war in France then being carried on as a steadily losing struggle on the English side, though it dragged on for nearly twenty years after this, before the English were finally driven out of the country.

[1] Patent Roll, 14 Henry VI.

[2] Welsh Records, Cal. Recog. Rolls of Palatinate of Chester from the earliest period to the end of the reign of Henry IV.

[3] Patent Roll, 1437.

1439. In the seventeenth year of Henry VI's reign, the King granted the castle, lordship, and manor of Chirk and Chirkland for £3,350 in fee to Henry, Bishop of Winchester.[1] This once more brings Chirk into touch with great matters of state. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, was at the head of the Council of powerful lords who were governing England at this time—Henry VI being a boy of sixteen.

1462. The facts regarding the lordship of Chirk in 1462 and the next few years are at first sight extremely perplexing and contradictory. In the year after Edward IV's succession, Chirk was granted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the King's brother, with "knights' fees, fealties, advowsons," etc., the patent winding up the list with "waif, stray, soc and sac, tholl and them, infangtheff and outfangtheff."[2] Notwithstanding this grant, Henry,

1463. Duke of Somerset, seems to have been in possession of the lordship in the following year. This is proved by a deed, the manuscript of which is still preserved, in which he grants lands in Chirk. The deed runs as follows:

"Henry, Duke of Somerset, Marches, Dorset, Lord of Chirk and Chirkland, grants and confirms to Robert ap David ap Robert lands, tenements, and woods within the town called y Vaerdre in the Regildr of Trevor Isclaudd in the lordship of Chirklande, parcel of land and wood in the said town between a park called Park y Waun Ugha and the metes of the town of Waun Issa, and the

[1] Patent Roll, 17 Henry VI.

[2] *Ibid.*, Edw. IV. "Soc and sac," the right to hold courts and try causes. "Infangtheff," the privilege of the lord of a manor to judge thieves taken on his manor.

metes of the town of Manatton, etc.; also a fulling mill with water course belonging to the same, the site of the mill being called y Pandy Kerric in the said town of Waun Issa. Dated at Castle of Chirk, 20 September, 3 Edward IV" (1463).[1]

Only three months after this there is another patent, granting Chirkland to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the form of words on this occasion being as follows: "all castles, lordships, etc., in England and Wales belonging to Henry, late Duke of Somerset, in the King's hands by reason of his forfeiture."[2] This forfeiture was the consequence of the prominent part taken by Somerset in the Lancastrian cause. He was executed in the following year.

The curiously brief possession of Chirkland by the Duke of Gloucester, from some time in 1462 to some time in 1463, is probably accounted for in the following way. We find that Henry, Duke of Somerset, had previously been attainted by Act of Parliament in November 1461, but was restored in 1463. This seems to point to his having been in possession of Chirkland before his attainder in 1461, and to its having been given to the King's brother, Gloucester, during the year of his first attainder, and then restored to Somerset in 1463. He held it for less than a year. On his final disgrace it must have been re-granted to the Duke of Gloucester, whom we find in possession as late as 1475, as we shall see later. Of

[1] Puleston MSS. At the foot of this document is added: "Thys may be takyn by lesse [lease] by causse this Duk of Somersett was a trator."

[2] Patent Roll, dated 20th Dec., 1463.

Richard's connection with Chirk there does not seem to be any record.

1465-6. An account rendered by the bailiffs of Chirk Town for the year 1465-6 supplies much interesting detail regarding the customs of the time. In the original document such quaint phrases as "le foulyng" and "le Oter-huntyng" appear from time to time—the latter phrase bringing home to us the fact that four hundred and fifty years have not altered the life of the little valley in some of its aspects, and that otter hunting on the Ceiriog has probably gone on without a break from that day to this.

Otter hunting on the Ceiriog.

Chirk Town. "The account of David ap Griffith ap Madoc and John ap Ieuan ap Miler, Bailiffs there from the vigil of St. Michael, 5 Edward IV, to the vigil of St. Michael, 6 Edward IV.

Farm of tolls and fairs. Of farm of the new hall and 12 shops there they do not render anything this year, because the said hall is in ruins, and no shops remain there.

And of £6. 13*s.* 4*d.* of farm of toll and of markets of fairs, and the toll of the commote of Nanheudo, also the moiety of forfeitures for tolls carried away or concealed, and of all penalties incurred by any for not making customary suits at the market of the town, as they were accustomed to do in the times of Edmund and Richard, late lords of the lordship aforesaid, so leased to Meredith ap Griffith ap Eden this year. (In previous years leased for £12.) Sum: £6. 13*s.* 4*d.*

Perquisites of Courts. And of 3*s.* 4*d.* of pleas and perquisites of all courts held there this year.

Of any escheats, goods and chattels of any outlaws,

felons and fugitives there this year they render nothing, because no lands and tenements, goods or chattels of these were seized there this year. Sum 3*s.* 4*d.*

They render account of money delivered to Stewell Worsley, Receiver there, so of 40*s.* 8*d.* of arrears, as of £6. 17*s.* 8*d.* of the issues of his office. £8. 18*s.* 4*d.* Delivery of money.

The Account of Howel Lloyd and David ap Humphrey, Bailiffs there from the vigil of St. Michael, 5 Edward IV, to the same vigil, 6 Edward IV. Glyn.

Of 38*s.* 11*d.* of carrying works called Trethtithio[1] payable at the feast of All Saints. Customary works.

Of part of £4. 10*s.* 11*d.* of the whole of this work of the Commote of Nanheudo.

And of 23*s.* 4*d.* of works of reaping of the tenants of the lord, part of 60*s.* 11½*d.* of this work of the whole Commote aforesaid, payable at the feast of St. Oswald. Reaping.

And of 15*s.* 7½*d.* of a certain custom called Trethtertum [?] received of any dwelling house; payable at the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And of 41*s.* 8*d.* of a certain Tax called Trethcausty[2] annually received of tenants there for repair of the lord's dairy house, at the term of the Apostles Philip and James, and of 10*s.* 4*d.* of a certain tax called Treth Scubor of part of 23*s.* 4*d.* of the whole commote, annually received of the tenants there for repairing and mending the lord's barn there at the term of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The dairy house. The lord's barn.

And of 53*s.* 4*d.* of a certain rent called Kilgh for food for the lord's horses payable at Christmas, part of 100*s.* of this rent of the whole Commote. The lord's horses.

[1] Tithes. [2] For the explanation of these taxes, see pp. 77-78.

And of 23*s.* 8*d.* of rent called Kilgh for food for the horses of the Steward and his groom there.

And of 22*s.* 2*d.* of a certain rent called Trethweission vaghan [1] for food for the lord's little grooms.

The "Oterhuntyng" and "Foulyng."

And of 6*s.* 10*d.* of a certain tax called Trethdonergon [2] and Gderyn [3] for help for the grooms and their servants in "le Oterhuntyng" and "Foulyng," to them re-leased.

The mill of Glyn.

And of £4 of certain rent received of the tenants of Glyn for the repair of the mill and the turning of the water and maintenance of the course of the same to the said mill.

Farm of the mill of Glynvaur.

And of 75*s.* 4*d.* of rent of the mill of Glynvaur.

And of 2*s.* of increase of rent of the same mill.

The mill of Crogen.

And of 10*s.* of rent of the mill of Crogen.

Issues of the manor.

And of 13*s.* 4*d.* of farm of the Chapel of Chirke, part of 26*s.* 8*d.* of farm of the same, let to divers tenants of the country for the court to be held there.

Of farm of the office of Bailiff this year they render nothing, because no one wished to rent it.

And of 4*s.* of fee of the Bailiff, received of fines and amercements there contingent, reserved to the Lord, of which the Bailiff will receive of any fine, greater or less, 4*d.*

And of any amercements less than 12*d.*, 1*d.*; and if it happen to be 12*d.*, a fee of 2*d.*; and so of each 6*d.*, 1*d.* to the sum of 4*d.*, and not more by roll of the Court this year.

[1] Properly "gweision bychain," see p. 78.

[2] For upkeep of the hounds.

[3] Properly "aderyn"; literally "birding," *i.e.*, hawking or fowling. A. N. Palmer.

[Here follow the Steward's fees on much the same lines.]

And of 6*s.* 8*d.* of a certain custom called Kilgh for the Bailiff, received of any dwelling-house of native tenants there 6*d.* and of any dwelling-house upon the demesne land 4*d.*, and of any free tenant not having tenants under him 1*d.*, in the name of Bailiff's fee by the Court Roll above mentioned.

Perquisites of the Court.

And of 73*s.* 2*d.* of pleas and perquisites of two Turns[1] and the Court held there this year.

Forestry at Glyn.

The account of the chief Forest there for the time above mentioned: David ap Howel Vaghan, Woodward there, renders nothing of the farm of his bailiwick there this year, because no one wished to hire it. Lately let for 20*s.* 2*d.* Nor does he render account of attachments and perquisites of the Forest Court with fees thereof contingent this year, because there happened to be none. And of 62*s.* of farm of the pasture of the Forest of Carraunt this year, so leased to David ap Howel Vaghan, Woodward, as in the Court Roll this year. Lately leased for £4 a year.

Of sale of turf there this year he renders nothing, because none was sold.

For the same reason he renders nothing for the sale of timber blown down by the wind.

And of 13*s.* 4*d.* of a certain rent called Tong[2] received of the tenants for exoneration from taking an annual oath for fealty.

[1] See *ante*, p. 79.

[2] "Tong"=twnc, see p. 77.

And of 7*s.* 9½*d.* of a certain rent called Trethmargaiaf[1] received of the tenants there."[2]

A comparison of this account with the last bailiffs' account from Chirk, rendered sixty-seven years earlier, brings out clearly the decline in the prosperity of Chirk that had taken place in the interval. The picture suggested by the later account is not a cheerful one. The "new hall" in ruins, the twelve shops closed, and the apparent inability of the people of Chirkland to rent various offices which they had formerly done—all this points to "bad times." If we turn from the local affairs of Chirk to those of the nation we find more than enough to account for this depression. Not only had the struggle for Welsh liberty, under Owain Glyndwr, begun and ended in the period between the two accounts, but at the time of the later account England had been, for ten years past, engaged in the Wars of the Roses. We have seen how prominent a part Thomas, Earl of Arundel, played in the war with Glyndwr. Every man he could raise from his Chirk estates would have to follow him in these campaigns; while the free tenants would be taxed to the utmost for war expenses. No account of the estate exists to show whether Chirkland recovered its prosperity after Glyndwr's campaigns were over. If it did recover, the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses would once more drain every available man from the land, and would account for the singular lack of men to rent the usual offices farmed out by the estate.

[1] Properly "treth maer gauaf," see p. 77.

[2] Ministers' Accounts $\frac{634}{10,324}$.

Certain enactments of the lords of Bromfield and Yale, in the next year, bear upon the life of Chirk, as it is probable that much the same local laws existed in these two adjoining border lordships. The enactments are of great length, and deal in detail with a large number of points, both phraseology and spelling adding considerably to the quaintness of the documents. The following are a couple of extracts: 1467.

"Vacaboundes: Item: that all vacaboundes and myghty beggars, beynge or comynge withynne the lordshipp, departe and goe out of the lordshippe on this side the feste of Hallow-masse next comyng, upon peyn of imprisonement of theyre bodyes and forfeture of theyre godes and catalle. "Vacaboundes and myghty beggars."

Wepons: Item: it is ordeyned that no man presume or take upon hym to bere opinly, in any town, vilage, feyre or market place within the said lordshipp, spere, pollax, lawnce gay,[1] byll, gleyve, hook, swerde, nor oder wepon, havyng poynt or ege; but if it be awaiteinge on the lordes, there styward, constable of their Castell of Lyons, or any oder officer or minister doynge or executynge their offices, upon peyne of imprisonment and forfeitynge of their wepons."[2]

In the same year there is a "grant (by several cardinals) of remission of 100 days to those who should go to the Chapel of St. Goddvarch, confessor and abbot, or to the cemetery at Chirk of St. Tissilio, confessor, and 1467.

[1] A kind of lance.

[2] Ordained by Commissioners appointed by the Lords of the Lordshipp of Bromfield and Yale. Anno 7 Edw. IV, 1467. Quoted by Lloyd in his *Powys Fadog*.

Mass in the Chapel of hirk.

hear mass of Richard ap John ap David, priest of the said diocese, or give to him support, or say Pater Noster and Ave Maria for the souls of his parents on certain days." [1]

1475-6.

In the fifteenth year of Edward IV's reign a pardon is granted to the King's brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and Anne, his wife, "of all offences committed by them." In this document Richard is spoken of as the occupier of "the lordship, manor, town, and township of Chirke and Chirkeland in the marches of Wales." [2]

The above pardon does not appear to have extended to the confirmation of Gloucester in his possessions, as we find the King, in the same year, granting Chirkland to Sir William Stanley, together with another estate in Kent. The list of privileges and dues appertaining to the lordships is so lengthy and curious as to be worth giving here in full. The Patent Roll runs as follows:

"The King, in exchange and surrender of the castle and manor of Skipton in Craven and of Marton in Craven, in Co. York, has granted to Sir William Stanley, Kt. in special tail, to wit to his heirs male, the castle, lordship and manor of Chirk and Chirkelandes, within the march of Wales, adjacent to Co. Shropshire, and the lordship and manor of Wilmyngton, Co. Kent, with all towns, townships, hamlets, messuages, lands, meadows,

[1] Puleston MSS.: Abstract by the Historical MSS. Commission, 1870.

[2] Patent Roll, 15 Edw. IV.

feedings, pastures, woods, waters, stanks,[1] stews,[2] mills, gardens, dovecotes, rents, services, reversions, courts, leets, offices, views of frank-pledge, mines of coal, and lead, escheats, liberties, franchises, rights, commodities, knights' fees, advowsons, wards, marriages, scutages, reliefs, hundreds, wapentakes, commotes, fines, amercements, forfeitures, fairs, markets, places, parks, warrens, fisheries, wreck of sea,[3] treasure trove, waifs, strays, chattels of felons, fugitives and outlaws, and returns and executions of writs."[4]

Sir William Stanley is a prominent figure in three reigns. He was made chamberlain of Chester by Edward IV, and on the accession of Richard III he was made Justiciar of North Wales. He is said to have built himself "the fairest gentleman's house in all Chestreshyre." A letter written from this house at Ridley to his cousin Piers Warburton of Arley, affords a significant hint as to the value of Sir William's adherence to any king or cause. He excuses himself from a promise to kill a buck in his cousin's park, "beying so besy with olde Dyk I can have no layf thereunto."[5]

A man may be excused for feeling no sentiment of respect or affection for such a master as Richard III, but Sir William's loyalty was equally unreliable when he subsequently transferred it to Henry VII. His method appears to have been the simple one of getting

[1] "Stank," a pool or pond.
[2] "Stew," a small pond where fish are kept for table.
[3] This refers, of course, to the Kentish estate.
[4] Patent Roll, 15 Edw. IV.
[5] Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, vol. ii, p. 301.

all the lands and offices he could wring out of each sovereign (and being extremely indignant if he considered them insufficiently secured to his heirs for ever) and then betraying the giver on the first occasion when he suspected the rising of a new star.

When "olde Dyk" had served his turn, and Henry Tudor promised to be the rising star, Stanley decided the battle of Bosworth in Henry's favour by deserting, with a large division of the army, from Richard's banner when victory hung in the balance.

William Stanley's relations with the three sovereigns whom he served are touched upon in a contemporary poem called *The Most Pleasant Song of Lady Bessy, the eldest daughter of King Edward IV, and how she married King Henry VII of the House of Lancaster.* The events recorded in this poem were of vital interest to the men of Chirkland, large numbers of whom were fighting under Stanley in the battle of Bosworth. At the opening of the poem the Lady Bessy (Elizabeth of York) is making an appeal to Lord Derby to remember that it was her father, Edward IV, who had given him and his brother, Sir William Stanley, all their lands, and made them what they then were. In the course of this appeal she mentions Chirkland among Sir William's possessions.[1]

[1] Two MSS. of this poem are preserved. The earlier of these, from which the first of the two following extracts is taken, was transcribed in the reign of Charles II, and in this transcription the English has been, to some extent, modernized. The second (Harl. MSS. 367) preserves the older spelling, and differs in its contents, especially at the outset, from the other MS. It does not contain the list of Stanley's possessions. J. O. Halliwell, in editing the poem for the Percy Society, says: "It appears from some passages, where the

"For Jesus' sake be merry and glad
Be blythe of blood, of bone, and blee,[1]
And of your words be sober and sad
And a little while listen to me:
I shall tell you how Lady Bessy made her moan,
And down she kneeled upon her knee,
Before the Earle of Derby herself alone,
These were her words fair and free:—
'Who was your beginner, who was your ground,
Good Father Stanley will you tell me?
Who married you to the Margaret Richmond,
A Dutchess of a high degree?

And Harden lands under your hands,
And Moulesdale [2] also under your fee?
Your brother Sir William Stanley by Parliament
The Holte Castle who gave him truely?
Who gave him Brome-field that I now ment?
Who gave him Chirk-land to his fee?
Who made him High Chamberlain of Cheshire?
Of that county far and near,
They were all wholly at his desire,
When he did call they did appear.'"

The poem goes on to describe how Bessy worked upon the old Earl of Derby secretly to summon Sir William and many others to the support of the Earl of Richmond, and to send a message over the sea to recall him to England. There is a delightful scene in which

writer abruptly changes from the third to the first person, that the poem was composed by Bessy's 'true esquire,' Humphrey Brereton who was in the service of Lord Stanley.... The antiquity of the poem is satisfactorily proved by the multiplicity of those minute traits of language and manners which must have been forgotten by a more recent writer. . . . The peculiar features of the age, the costume, and the difficulty of correspondence, are too faithfully described to leave any reasonable doubt of the early period of the poem."

[1] "Blee," colour, hue, complexion. [2] Mold.

Bessy's "good education" comes out. She is having a secret interview with "the oulde Earle," and has used all her wiles upon him, including the time-honoured method of putting him into a good humour by producing excellent wine.

"'Alas, Bessye, said that noble lorde [1]
And thy boune for sothe graunte wolde I the,
But there is no clarke that I doe truste
This nyghte to wryte for the and me,
Because our matter is soe highe,
Leaste any man woulde us bewraye,'
Bessie said, 'father, yt shall not neede,
I am a clarke full good I say.'
She drew a paper upon her knee,
Pen and yncke she had full readye,
Handes white and fingers longe,
She dressed hir to wryte full spedelye."

Henry of Lancaster is summoned, and his supporters are watching a favourable wind for his landing in the west.

"Sir William Standley, at the Holte he lyethe
And looked over his head so hee;
'Where standeth the wynde?' then he saithe,
'Is there any man can tell me?'
'The wynde it standeth sowth weste,
See,' said a knyghte that stoode hym bye,
'This nyghte yonder royall prynce
Into England entereth hee.'"

Henry lands and the battle of Bosworth follows.

"Sir William Standley, that noble knyghte,
Ten thousand red coates that day had hee,"

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[1] This and the rest of the extracts are from the less modernized MS.

and under those red coats marched many men of Chirk. Then the King perceives Stanley's forces and understands the treachery that will lose him the battle.

"King Richard hoved on the mountaynes,
And was ware of the banner of boulde Stanley;
He said, 'Feche hither the Lord Strange to me,
For doubtless he shall dye this daye,
To the deathe, Lorde, make the bowne,
For by Marye that mylde maye,
Thou shalt dye for thyne uncle's sake
His name is William Standley.'"

Then Richard sees the rest of the forces and realizes that the game is up. Among the many faults of his unattractive character lack of courage does not seem to have been one.

"A knyghte to Kynge Richard can saye
(It was gude Sir William of Harryngton),
He sayeth 'We are like all here
To the death sone to be don,
For there may noe man their strockes abyde
The Standlees dynntes they bene soe stronge;
Ye may come in another tyme,
Therefore me thynke you tarye too longe.
Your horse is ready at your hand,
Another daye ye may wurshippe wynne
And to reigne with royaltye,
And weare the crowne and be our Kynge.'
He said, 'Give me my battle axe in myne hande,
Set the crowne of England upon my head so hee,
For by Hym that made both sun and moune
Kynge of England this daye will I dye!'"

He dies fighting. And the union of the Houses of York and Lancaster brings the long struggle of the Wars of the Roses to an end.

"Greate solas yt was to see,
I tell you, maysters, without lett,
When the Read Rowse[1] of mekyll price
And yonge Bessie togeder were mett.
A byshoppe them maryed with a rynge,
The two bloodes of high renowne;—
Bessie said, 'Nowe may we synge,
We two bloodes are made at one.'
The Earle of Derbyche was there,
And Sir William Standley a man of mighte;
Upon their heads they sett the crowne,
In presence of many a wurthye wyghte.
Then came he under a clowde,
That some tyme in England was full hee;
The harte began to keste his head,
After no man myghte yt see;
But God that is bothe bryghte [and] sheene,
And borne was of a mayden free
Save and keep our comlye queene,
And also the poor comenalitye!"

In reward for his help at the battle of Bosworth, gifts and honours were heaped upon Stanley by Henry VII.[2] He was confirmed in his possession of Chirkland, and was made Lord Chamberlain and Knight of the Garter. Large sums of money were also probably bestowed upon him, as he was reported after this time to be the richest subject in the kingdom, having forty thousand marks in ready money, and £3,000 a year.

He now repaired Chirk Castle, which had suffered heavily in the late wars. Leland, in his *Itinerary*,[3]

[1] The Red Rose.

[2] It has been represented (Lloyd's *History of Powys Fadog*) that lands were "granted" to Stanley as a reward for his action at Bosworth. As a matter of fact this grant was merely a confirmation as the lands had been in his possession since 1475.

[3] 1536-39.

alludes to this in his valuable description of the Chirkland of his time. It is noteworthy that to the chronicler of the sixteenth century, as to his predecessors of the twelfth, the excellence of the Chirk woods calls for special comment. "Chirk and Chirkelande," he writes, "lyeth on the hither side by south of De[1] agaynste Yale, and weste of it upon De lyeth a commothe of Merionethshire caullid Dernion;[2] and plaine southe of this Chirke in sum place touchith Poyslande. There is never a market town in this lordship. At Chirk self be a few houses, and there is on a small hille a mighty large and stronge castel, with divers towers a late well repayred by Sir William Standeley, the Yerle of Derby's brother. There hath beene 2 parkes. One yet remayneth caullid Blake Park.[3] Keriog Ryveret cummith on the southe side of Chirke Castel. De Ryver is wythin a myle of the north side of it. The moste parte of Chirk and Chirkland on the southe towards Poys[4] lande is great plenty of mervelus good woodde, and thorough reasonable wood. Moch of the lordship ys hilly, but in valleys by De and Keriog goode corne and medow, and in sum other places. This lordship or lordships in Walsch is caullid Guaine."[5]

"A mighty large and stronge castel."

"Keriog Ryveret."

"Mervelus good woodde."

A petition from Stanley to Henry VII in 1485 reads more like a demand. The wording is quaint, and the precautions against dispossession at any future time are unusually elaborate and detailed. The document begins by enumerating an extraordinary list of manors in his

[1] Dee. [2] Edeyrnion.

[3] Black Park. The part of Chirk where this stood continues to bear this name.

[4] Powys. [5] Y Waen, or Waun.

possession. It then continues: "That therefore in consideration of the true and faithful service that the said Sir William hath doon unto your Highness, it may please your most noble and habundannt grace, by the advyse and assent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and your Commons in this present Parliament assembled . . . to declare, ordeyne, establishe and enacte, that the said Sir William Stanley and his heyres, have, holde, possede, enjoye and fully inherit for evermore, all and everyche the said Manors etc. . . . without interrupcion, vexacion, impediment, clayme, trouble, hurte, molestation, inquyetacion, ympechment, or damage, in eny wise, nether of you, Soveraigne Lord, ne any your Heyres, ne any the Heyres of any your Predecessors that have been kings of England."

The allusion to "true and faithful service" is a little unfortunate in view of the fact that he had betrayed one master at the crisis of that master's fortunes, and ten years later was to be executed for taking part in Perkin
1495. Warbeck's rebellion. Camden, writing in the next century, has some amusing comments on the "firm" tone which Stanley adopted towards the King in the petition quoted above. After naming the various owners of the lands which included Chirk, he continues: "And afterwards [it came] to Sir William Stanley, Chamberlane to King Henry VII, who, contesting with his soveraigne about his good services (when he was honorably recompensed) lost his head, forgetting that soveraignes must not be beholding to subjects, howsoever subjects fancy their own good services."[1]

[1] Camden's *Britannia*, first edition (Latin), 1586; translated 1610.

The following is an account of the Chirk lordship for 1498.

"Declaration as well as of the valor of the lordship as of the reprises[1] there from the vigil of St. Michael the Archangel, 12 Henry VII, to the same day, 13 Henry VII (1498).

Chirk Vill	£	s.	d.
Rents of assize this year	1	3	8
Tolls there	6	0	0
Perquisites of Court		2	2
Total: £7 5 10			

Ystlawth (Isylawdd)			
Rents of assize this year	13	18	7¾
Farm of demesne land	3	5	2
Farm of herbage in small park		13	4
Mill of Trevor Issa		8	4
Mill of Crostith	1	3	4
Mill of Chirk	2	0	0
Fulling mill of Chirk, nothing because at present demolished.			
House of the chapel		5	0
Divers customs	3	1	5
Issues from lands of Richard Trevor in lord's hands because of his outlawry		19	6½
Perquisites of Court	2	1	3
Total: £27 16 0¼			

[Details as above in the following places, whereof I give here only the totals.]

[1] "Reprises," allowance and duties paid annually out of a manor and land.

	£	s.	d.
Glyn Ringild	27	8	8½
Llangollen	27	14	7¾
Moughnante (Mochnant)	27	14	10¾
Kenlleth Ring	19	12	3
Carreghova	9	2	4
Moughnante por'tura	3	15	5
Kenllegh P'poitur	3	19	10
Moughnante Forest	2	5	4
Llangollen Forest called Comcath'	4	6	8
Istlauth (Istlawdd) Forest		6	8
Glyn Carregnante Forest (Farm there)	1	6	8
Kynllegh Forest	166	0	6¾
Fees and wages—(in fee of Sir Edward Pickering Knt., seneschal of the court by year £10)—and 10 other entries	38	8	
Cost of necessaries etc. (parchment, auditing etc.)	4	4	1

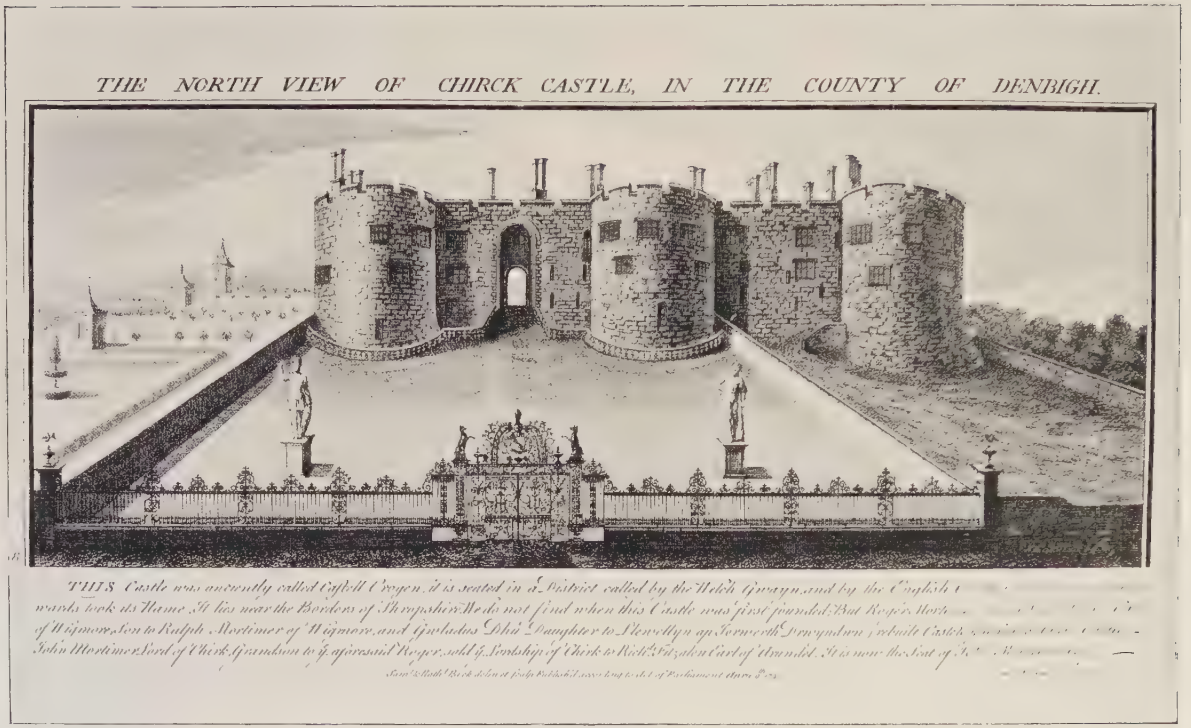
Repairs of mills (of Chirk) 11*s.* 10*d.*; Moughnante £4 4*s.* 8*d.*; Carreghova £4 19*s.* 4*d.*

COST OF THE CASTLE OF CHIRK

	£	s.	d.
And in like costs and expenses made upon the repair of the houses of the Castle and without, this year	4	8	10

Fees and Wages

	£	s.	d.
Fee of Edward Pickeryng knight, steward of the court there, yearly	10	0	0


THE NORTH VIEW OF CHIRCK CASTLE, IN THE COUNTY OF DENBIGH.
THIS Castle was anciently called Castell Crogen, it is seated in a District called by the Welch Gwayn and by the English
wards took its Name. It lies near the Borders of Shropshire. We do not find when this Castle was first founded: But Roger
of Wigmore, Son to Ralph Mortimer of Wigmore, and Gwladus Dhu Daughter to Llewellyn ap Iorwerth Drwyndwn, rebuilt Castle
John Mortimer Lord of Chirk, Grandson to the aforesaid Roger, sold the Lordship of Chirk to Richd. Fitzalan Earl of Arundel.

CHIRK CASTLE FROM THE NORTH

From a print in the British Museum

	£	s.	d.	
And to the same Edward, constable of the Castle of Chirke yearly	10[1]	0	0	
And to John Edward, Receiver there	5	0	0	
And to Richard Grenewey, auditor there	5	0	0	
And to Robert Irelonde, locum tenens of the steward of the court there	2	0	0	
And to Thomas Irelonde, clerk of the court there	1	10	0	
And to William Griffith, bailiff itinerant there		10	0	
And to Thomas Strange, keeper of the gate of the castle there.	3	0	10	
And to John Holande parker of the black park ('nigri pci')	3	0	10	The Black Park.
And to Nicholas Pulforde, parker of the park under the castle	2	0	0	"The park under the castle."
And to the clerk of the accounts for writing the rolls of accounts	1	6	8	

NECESSARY AND OUTSIDE CHARGES

And in parchment and ink for writing the rolls of accounts and court rolls		10	0	Parchment and ink.
Expenses of the auditors, receiver, and of all officers being there at the time of the audit this year	2	12	9	
And for payment of divers persons for cutting down branches of trees and holly for the sustentation of deer in winter, within the parks there, 9*s.* 8*d.*, together with the repairs of the cattle pens of the king there 2*s.* this year		11	8	"Branches and holly for the deer in winter." "Repairs of the cattle pens."

[1] This is altered to £5.

	£	s.	d.
Remains:	108	3	1¼
[Add] Arrears owing to King for preceding year	47	5	5
Remains:	155	8	6¾
Deducting arrears of rent etc. remains:	150	14	8¾
Of which, delivery of pence to the King's cofferer	60	8	9

Remains: £90 5*s.* 11¾*d.*, of which deduct arrears, £10 9*s.* 10*d.* and £21 15*s.* 6¾*d.*

[No total given but amounts to £58 0*s.* 7*d.*]"

HENRY VII'S CHARTER TO CHIRKLAND

AFTER Sir William Stanley's execution, Chirk remained in the hands of the Crown for some years. During this period Henry VII granted a charter to the inhabitants of Chirkland. This document is of great interest from many points of view. It will be remembered that, at the beginning of Henry's reign, at the time of Owain Glyndwr's rising, much repressive legislation against the Welsh was placed upon the statute book. Amongst other disabilities the Welshman was forbidden to buy or hold any land over the border or to hold any public office in an English borough. These laws were still in operation in Henry VII's reign, and it was for the purpose of exempting the inhabitants of Chirk from these disabilities, and also from certain taxes, that the charter was granted.

It opens by reciting the statute of Henry IV.

Charter of Henry VII

"Henry King of England and France and lord of Ireland in greeting. By statute of Parliament 2 Henry IV it was determined 'that no Welshman or man of Wales ought to acquire or obtain any lands, tenements, lordships, manors, towns, villages, rents, reversions, services or hereditaments whatsoever within England or in any English borough or town within Wales, to hold to himself and heirs, in fee simple, fee tail, or in any manner

whatsoever. Nor that any such Welshman or man of Wales should undertake, hold, occupy, or take upon himself any office of Sheriff, Mayor, Bailiff, Constable, or similar office in any city, borough, or town, within England or in any English borough or town within Wales,' under certain penalties set forth in the said statute. But for divers services rendered to us in times past We have granted to our subjects the tenants and Inhabitants within our lordship of Chirk and Chirkland in the Marches of Wales, for ourselves and our heirs, that all and singular tenants and inhabitants within the lordship of Chirk and Chirkland aforesaid, and their heirs and successors there for the time being, may purchase, have, receive and hold lands, tenements, lordships, manors, towns, villages, castles, rents, reversions, and services, possessions and hereditaments whatsoever within England and in English boroughs and towns within Wales, to themselves and their heirs in fee simple, to a term of life or of years, any kind of fee tail or in any other way whatsoever for ever. And that such tenants and inhabitants and their heirs and successors and any of them may be free to the office of sheriffs, mayors, custodians of the peace, constable or any office whatsoever agreeable to them, if to any office they should be elected or called, within England and in English boroughs and towns within Wales, freely they may undertake, hold, enjoy and occupy the same quietly well and in peace. The said tenants and inhabitants, their heirs and successors may be burgesses in any English borough or town in Wales without contradiction or harm from us or our heirs, or our officers, ministers or anyone whatsoever. And moreover we have granted for us and our heirs that

the land, etc., held according to the tenure of Gavelkind or Welsh tenure and divisable among male heirs shall not be divisable, but descend to the eldest son or the heir of the eldest son, etc., according to the common law of England. Also we have granted to the said tenants and inhabitants and their heirs and successors that they may freely and without any penalty or forfeiture go to any place, either a market or any place outside the lordship aforesaid to sell any goods or chattels; and they shall not be compelled to pay toll for their goods, etc., sold within the lordship of Chirk; and the said tenants and inhabitants shall be quit and exonerated of all and every toll paid to us and our heirs, officers and ministers within the lordship aforesaid, as the burgesses of the town of Chirk are so exonerated in the same lordship. The said tenants and inhabitants, their heirs and successors are to have free and common pasture for all beasts and . . .[1] in our forest of Kunlath,[2] Karregnant [Craignant], Bodlich,[3] Dolwen and Mochnant in the lordship aforesaid, without any rent or money being paid to us, our heirs or farmers there. And that the tenants within the commote of Nanheudwy and in the Ringildry of Mochnant, or their heirs and successors, are not to be compelled or have exacted by us, our heirs, officers or ministers, the services of the office of Ringild, nor to be compelled to come or make suit at any of our mills within the said lordship. And the tenants of . . . and Moghnant are not to make suit to our Court at Chirk, but only within the commote of Kynlleth and Moghnant as anciently . . .

[1] The MS. is illegible at this and many other places.
[2] This may be an attempt at the Welsh "Cwmcath."
[3] Should be "Bodlith."

And further a certain custom or exaction there called works and customs, . . . treth melyn called works of the mill, or other works at our mills, works of reaping, treth mayr gaiaf[1] treth causty,[2] treth scubor,[3] treth gweission Bychayn[4] treth oen[5] . . . Kylch Ringild, Kylch ebolion[6] and . . . kylch equorum,[7] of the steward and his grooms, Kylch Koydwr[8] twng amobir[9] and avowry and money of avowry other wise arddel and arian ardell[10] . . . nor any service in, of or for the said works, treth, kylch, tung [twng] amobyr and ardel and arian arddel and custom aforesaid shall be levied, paid or leviable by us, our heirs, forester, ringilds, bailiffs, etc. But that all the tenants, inhabitants, their heirs and successors aforesaid shall be quit for ever without any contradiction, hindrance, disturbance, molestation, or harm of us, our heirs, officers, etc., any custom or use against the premises notwithstanding.

Witnesses.—William . . . our Chancellor, and
Thomas, Archbishop of York,
Richard, Bishop of Winchester, keeper of our Privy Seal,
Edmund, Bishop of Salisbury, etc.

Dated at Westminster, 20 July, 21 [Henry VII]."[11]

[1] Bailiff's winter tax. Probably paid twice a year.

[2] For maintenance of cheese-house.

[3] For maintenance of lord's barn.

[4] Tax for the upkeep of the lord's retinue. There was a very ancient right of maintenance for the pages attending the lord.

[5] "Oen" is Welsh for a lamb. [6] "Ebolion," colts.

[7] Taxes for the maintenance of the lord's horses, and those of his servants.

[8] "Koydwr," woodcutter. [9] Marriage tax.

[10] A warranty from the lord.

[11] This charter is dated "21 Henry" only—but an examination of the names of the witnesses establishes it as 21 Henry VII. It is preserved in the Puleston MSS. (unpublished).

In the year following the granting of the charter, a letter was sent from some official (it is not clear what office he held) which seems to imply that Chirkland had to pay fairly heavily for privileges which, judging by the wording of the charter, one would have taken to be free gifts. The letter is addressed to Lancelot Landor, receiver of the lordship of Bromfield and Yale, and Mr. Edwards, deputy constable of the Castle of Chirk. It recites that the inhabitants of Chirkland had given 1,000 marks for privileges granted by letters patent, and that some had been paid. It authorizes them to levy the remainder, and ends with the phrase: "Trusting in your sadnesses[1] and wisdoms."

Chirkland seems to have been kept either wholly or partially in the hands of the Crown for some time after the beginning of the sixteenth century. Probably portions of it were either granted outright or let out to farm by the King, as we find the Duke of Suffolk in possession of some land in Bromfield and Yale and Chirkland in 1525.[2] That he only possessed a portion of the lordship is proved by a lease of land from the King to William Edwardes, Esq., in 1526. This document is worth quoting for the interest of the local detail.

"To the Court held 19th September, 17 Henry VIII, 1526.
came William Edwardes, Esq., in the presence of John Chilston, Kt., on behalf of the King also Steward of the lordship of Chirk, and took of the King one parcel of waste land to build a fulling mill in the town of Chirk,

[1] This is an interesting example of the old use of the word "sad" as a synonym for sober, discreet, wise.

[2] Royal MSS., British Museum.

to wit in length from le Panty Kerigk up to a place where the water, turning the mill of the Lord King called Melin Y Waun,[1] falls into the river Keriog in breadth between the old ditch, the said Panty Kerig on the one side and the said river on the other, and three parcels of the King's demesne land lying in the same town, of which the first was lately in the tenure of Margaret, wife of Ieuan, who paid 4*d.* a year rent, the second in the tenure of Robert ap Edward, and paid 4*d.* a year rent, and the third called Brynn Common y Castell lying within the outside ditch there. To be paid to the King and his heirs 22*d.*, to wit for the said two parcels of land late in the tenures of Margaret, wife of Ieuan, and Robert ap Edward, the ancient rent, and for the said parcel of land called Brynn Common 8*d.*, and for the waste land 6*d.* The said land to be held to the said William Edwardes and his heirs for a term of 40 years."[2]

A few years later there is a complaint to the King's steward of the lawlessness of the district—a feature which is perpetually recurring in the records of the said time relating to the March of Wales. The quaintness of phrase and spelling add a peculiar charm to this document.

"To the Right Worshipful Master Steward of Chirkland

Grevously compleynith unto your masterships all ye kynges true tenantes of Kenlleth and Moghnaunt in Chirkland, how that thay be dayly and nyghtly robbyd

[1] Chirk mill. [2] Puleston MSS. (unpublished).

and thare goodes and catelles stollyn from them aswell into powyshlande,[1] mowtheway[2] and merrionnithshyre as oder countreis to thayme adjoyning, within this twoo monthes to ye valew of C merkes and above. And all indefaute of a good officer, for keepyng of the countrey, as hathe been accustomed in tymes paste. For ye sergeaunt of ye peas callyd ye pencayse hathe used to watch in dyvers places of ye countrey, And take thevis and mysrewlye persons, And bryng thame to ye castell, wiche watche and excersise of ye said office made odre outlaws And theves for fere of ye same to Forbere, And durst not invade ne cume within ye said countreis tyll this ij yeres paste that that office hath not been delygently exercised ne occupiede to ye great inpoveryshenge And undoyng of all the trewmen in ye said countreis, and ye incresyng of thevis and evyll Rewlyd persons aswell in this countrey as oder countreis adjoynyng to yt; howmbly besichyng your mastership of sucour and remedy in ye premisses. And insomoche as ye be steward and hed officer of all ye said countreis, to provide and see that suche officer may be admyttyd And Awtorysed to exercise and occupie ye sayd office of cayse that woll take payne and doo thair delygens to save ye goodes of ye kynges pure tenantes And make waches, as hathe bene used afortyme And elles they must, ye most parte of tham departe ye countrey. And this for ye lufe of gode and for ye mynistracion off iustes [justice] wiche lieth nowe in your wysdome in this behalve."[3]

"ye incresyng of thevis and evyll Rewlyd persons."

[1] Powyslande. [2] Mawddwy.
[3] Stow MSS. 141, f. 34, British Museum.

A BUILDER'S ACCOUNT IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

AN account in 1529 of repairs to Chirk Castle on a large scale, supplies fuller information regarding wages than any previous account. The chief interest of this document lies in the fact that Chirk was by this time not only level with the rest of the country as regards wages paid, but was apparently above the average in certain trades. Carpenters, masons, and labourers are paid in this account as high a wage as they were getting in the same year at Oxford and Cambridge.[1] This is a remarkable fact, as the university towns usually paid a higher wage than any other part of England. That such a wage should be paid in a remote country district is even more surprising. And when we come to the plumber's wage in this account we find it still higher. He gets 8*d.* per day, *i.e.*, in our modern money values something between 40*s.* and 48*s.* per week.[2] Instances of plumbers' wages recorded in two other districts of England in this same year are lower than those paid at Chirk. Looking through this account we see that this high wage is paid in every case to John Panton. It may be that he was an exceptionally good and skilled workman, and was able to command an exceptional wage.

[1] See Rogers' *History of Prices.*

[2] Authorities differ as to whether the purchasing power of money at this time was ten or twelve times that of the present day.

Repairs to the Castle

"Reparacion done ther and payed by the handes of William Edwardes cunstabyll of the same Castell and John Norlery as followeth. Chyrke Castell.

	s.	*d.*	
Item payed at Chester to William Roper for ropes for the said Castell weying 5 stone and 1 lb price the stone 2*s.* 2*d.*, total	10	10	Ropes.
Item payed to Oliver Bolton ffor 3 poleys		3	"Poleys."
Item payed ffor 4 rynges of iron to the same poleys		2	
Item payed to Charles Eyton ffor 3 barres of iron weying half a hundred, and 18 lbs ffor crowes of iron	4	6	Iron for crowes.
Item ffor sharpyng of the same Crowes		2	
Item payed to John Norlery ffor his Costes 2 tymes to Chester ffor the said stuff		8	"2 tymes to Chester."
Item payed to Thomas Gruffrye ffor meseryng roddes		1	
Item payed to John Gruff ffor a hand barowe		3	"Ffor a hand barowe."
Item payed gruff ap Elis ffor a gryndill stone		6	"Ffor a gryn dill stone."
Item ffor the Careyng of the said iron and ropes from Chester to Chirke Castell		8	

Wages to Carpenters

Item payed to Olyver Bolton the 29 daye of May ffor his wages ffor 5 dayes price the day 6*d.*	2	6	
Item payed to David ap Ieuan ffor Careying Tymber oute of the litell parke and the blacke parke 2 dayes	2	0	Timber out of "the litell parke" and "the blacke parke."

		s.	d.
	LABORARES		
	Item payed to Hoell ap Jeres ffor his wages ffor a daye		4
Chirke Castell.	5th day of June in the year 21st Henry VIII		
	Item payed to Charles Eyton ffor half a hundred of iron and 6 lbs	3	4
Carriage of iron from Chester.	Item ffor the Careynge of the same iron ffrom Chester to Chirke		8
A spade.	Item for a spade		3
	WAGES TO CARPENTERS AND MASONS		
	Item payed to Olyver Bolton the same daye ffor his wages for 6 days price the day 6*d.*	3	0
	Item payed to Myles Gyll ffor his wage ffor 6 dayes price the day 5*d.*	2	6
	Item payed to Richard ap Edward ffor his wages for 5 dayes price the daye 6*d.* ffor gettyng of stones and leying of the same	2	6
	LABORARES		
	Item payed to David ap Jankyn ffor a daye and a half		6
	SAWYARES		
"Sawyng of a roode of Tymber."	Item payed to Ieuan ap hoell ap Robert and his brother ffor sawyng of a roode of Tymber	5	0
	CARIAGE		
"Stones ffrom the quarre to the Castell."	Item payed to David ap Ieuan for Careyng of stones ffrom the quarre to the Castell ffor 5 loodes	3	4

	s.	d.	
12 day of June in the year 21st Henry VIII			
Item ffor a locke to the store house dore within the Castell		6	"A locke to the store house dore."
Item payed to Ieuan ap John ap David ffor his wages ffor 2 dayes fallyng of woode ffor the lyme kylne		10	"Woode ffor the lyme kylne."
Item payed to Richard ap Edward ffor his wages ffor a daye leyng and settyng of stones		6	
LABORARES			
Item payed to Ieuan ap John ap William ffor his wages for 5 dayes	1	8	
Item ffor the hyre of his horse ffor 2 dayes careyng of sande		4	"Hyre of his horse ffor careyng of sande."
19th day of June in the 21st Henry VIII			Chirke Castell.
Item ffor a locke ffor oon of the dores in the newe Chamber ther		10	"A locke ffor the newe Chamber."
Item ffor half a thousand of bord nayles	1	0	
Item ffor 200 of spyke nayles		8	
Item payed to Edward Go (?) of Chirke ffor makyng of barres of iron ffor the newe chamber weying 120 lbs, price the lb one halfpenny	5	10	"Barres of iron ffor the newe chamber."
Item ffor 3 pynnes of iron ffor the poleys		2	
* * * * *			
PLUMBERS			
Item payed to the same John Panton ffor 8 lbs of sowder price the lb 4*d.*	2	8	"8 lbs of sowder [solder]."

		s.	d.
	CARRAGE		
"Tymber ffrom the Cunstabylle's house to the Castell."	Item payed to David ap Ieuan ap John ffor careyng of 2 loode of Tymber ffrom the Cunstabylle's house to the Castell		4
	Item payed to the same David ffor 2 dayes careyng of woode to the lyme kylne	2	0
	SLATERS		
"Slate stones at the quarre."	Item payed to John Slater ffor gettyng of 4 thousand of slate stones at the quarre price the thousand 2*s.* 6*d.*	10	0
	Item payed to hoell ap Res ffor gettyng of a thousand and a half of slate stones lyke price	3	9
	COLYS [COALS]		
"Colys [coals] ffor the lyme kylne."	Item payed to William Hanner ffor careyng of 24 horse-loodes of Colys ffor the lyme kylne pryce the loode 1*d.* halfpenny	3	0
	23 day of June in the 21 Henry VIII		
	LABORARES		
"Ffor makyng of a hovell on the lyme kylne."	Item payed to Richard ap Edward ffor makyng of a hovell on the lyme kylne		6
	LYME		
	Item payed to Richard ap Edward ffor Brennyng of and makyng of a kylne of lyme	16	0
	LATHIS		
	Item payed to hoell ap Jeres ffor makyng of 200 and a half of lathis		10

	s.	d.	
6 day of November in the year 21 Henry VIII			Chirke Castell.
Item payed ffor a locke for the chapell dore		6	
Item ffor a stapyll ffor the same dore		1	
Item ffor a locke ffor a newe dore above the Cunstabylles tower		8	
Item ffor 2 hynges ffor the same dore	1	10	
Item ffor great nayles ffor the same dore		8	
Item payed to Charles Eyton of Chester ffor half a hundred of iron	3	4	
Item payed to William ap Llywellen ffor the cariage of a loode of fflagges ffrom the quarre to the said Castell	1	4	
Item payed to the same William ffor the Careyng of the Tymber that did lye without the Castell into the same Castell		6	
Payed to John Slater and John Bromleye ffor leyng of fflagges in the ende of the guttyr in the newe lodgynges ffor 2 dayes	2	0	
Item payed to Richard Carver ffor the settyng of 10 dosyn of Crestes vppon the said house pryce the dosyn 4*d.*	3	4	"Ten dosyn of crestes uppon the newe lodgynges."
Item payed to Edward ap Mēd ffor his wages ffor a daye and halff in makyn of a newe dore in the said Cunstabylles tower price the daye 6*d.*		9	
Item paid to Richard ap Edward ffor his wages ffor a daye settyng of a hoke [hook] in the walle of the same dore		4	"Ffor settyng of a hoke [hook]."
Item payed ffor drynke to men that did helpe to lay the Tymber upon a pyle within the Castell		4	"Ffor drynke to men that did helpe to lay the Tymber upon a pyle."
Item payed ffor a rydell for lyme		2	

	s.	d.
Item payed to Edward ap Mēd ffor his wages ffor a daye in naylyng on the wyndowes in the said lodgynes		6
Item payed to John Davet ffor beme ffyllyng with clay betwene the sparres in the said lodgyng and ffor plasteryng the same	3	4
Item payed to John Norlery ffor his costes ffor hym and his horse at Chirke when the auditor was ther for 4 dayes	1	8
Total 22*s.* 4*d.*		

"Ryvettes ffor the boltes of iron ffor the prisoners."

Item payed to Edward Go, smyth, ffor ryvettes ffor the boltes of iron ffor prisoners 8
per me William Edwardes[1]

[Then follow receipts by John Norlery (who had the repairs in charge) for the money received from William Edwardes the Constable, for these repairs.

The account then continues:]

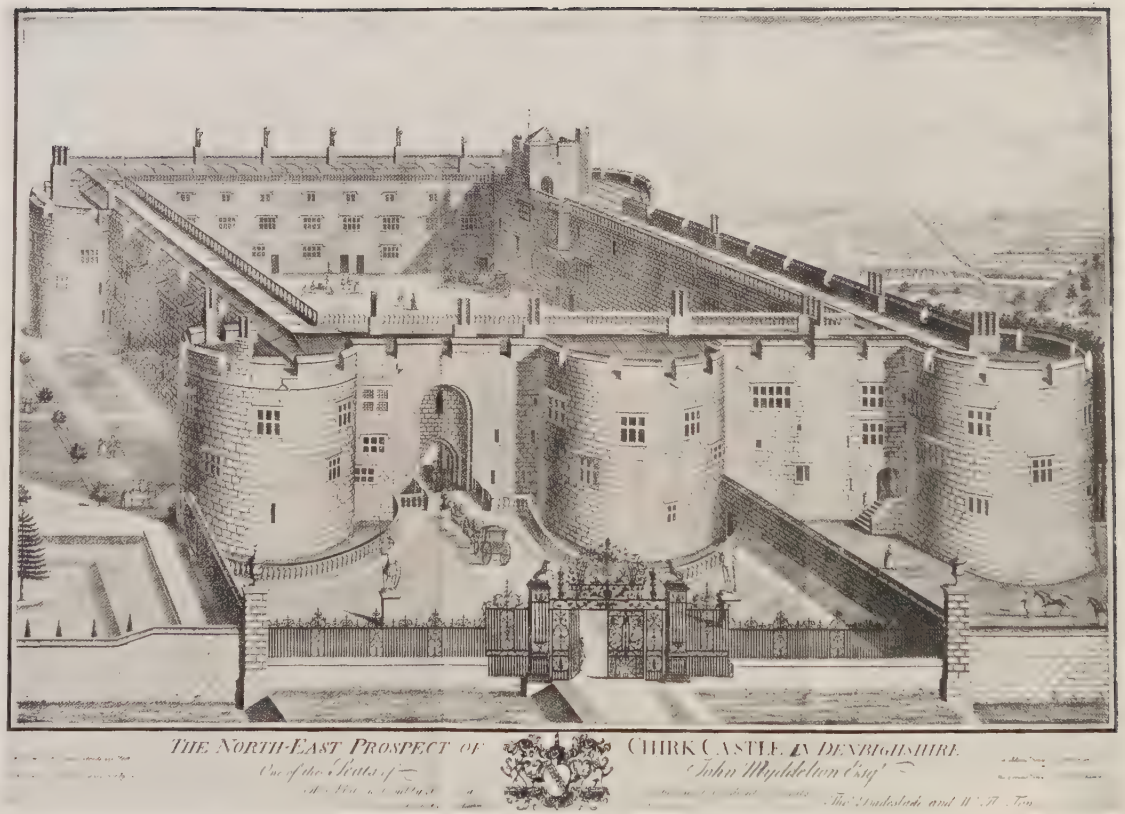
14 day of October in the 21 Henry VIII

PLUMMERS

"Chirke Castell: ye hall and towers."

Item payed to John Panton for his wages for 2 dayes price the daye 8*d.*	1	4
Item payed to hym for 12 lbs of sodder price the lb 4*d.*	4	0
Item payed to Ieuan ap John ap Mēd his servant for his wages for 2 dayes		8

[1] Exchequer Q. R. $\frac{489}{4}$ Record Office.



CHIRK CASTLE FROM THE NORTH-EAST

From a print in the British Museum

	s.	d.	
LABORARES			
Payed to Ieuan ap John ap Mēd for his wages for 3 dayes careyng out of rubbell out of the hall Toweres and Chamberes per me William Edwardes		12	"Careyng out of rubbell out of the hall Toweres and Chamberes."
7 day of August in the 21st Henry VIII			
PLUMMERS			
Item payed to John Panton for his wages for 6 dayes price the daye 8*d.*	4	0	Chirke Castell ye hall and Toweres.
LABORAR			
Item payed to David ap Gruff ap Elis for his wages for 5 dayes careyng of sande on the leades over the hall		20	"Careyng of sande on the leades over the hall."
Item for the hyre of his horse for 5 days		10	
14 day of August anno praedicto			
Item for 200 of spyke naylys		8	"200 of spyke naylys."
31 day of July 21 Henry VIII			
WAGES TO CARPENTERES			
Item payed to Thomas Kyrkes for his wages for 6 dayes price the day 5*d.*	2	6	
PLUMMERS			
Item payed to John Panton for his wages for 3 dayes price the daye 8*d.*	2	0	
Payed to Ieuan ap John his servant for his wages for 3 dayes price the daye 5*d.*	1	3	

17 day of July 21 Henry VIII

Sawyares	*s.*	*d.*
Item payed to Ieuan ap Hoell ap Robert and his brother for sawyng of halfe a roode of Tymber	2	6

Chirke Castell ye hall and Toweres.

Reparacion made on the hall and Toweres of the same Castell as followeth 10 day of July in the year 21 Henry VIII.

Mason	*s.*	*d.*
Item payed to Richard ap Edward for his wages for 2 dayes price the daye 6*d.*	1	0

Laborar		
Item payed to Ieuan ap Richard for his wages careyng of sande 1 daye		4
Item for the hyre of his horse a daye"[1]		2

Various brief items of minor importance relating to Chirk are mentioned in the records of these years.

1530. William Edwards, serjeant of the pantry, is given a lease of "the little park called Illyn" for eighty-five years at the annual rent of 13*s.* 4*d.* Lancelot Alford, or Halford,

1536. a groom of the wardrobe, is appointed "doorward of Chirke Castle."

Two years before the last entry it is said that Chirk had been given by Henry VIII to Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Somerset, and that at his death, at the age of seven-

[1] Excheq. Q. R. $\frac{489}{3}$.

teen, it again came into the hands of the Crown. The same writer says that in Edward VI's reign it was given to Thomas, Lord Seymour, brother of the Protector Somerset.[1]

[1] Pennant, in his *Tour in Wales*, is responsible for these statements regarding Somerset's and Seymour's possession. I have not been able to find his authority for them.

WALES UNDER ENGLISH LAW

IN 1536 Wales was united to England by Act of Parliament. This great change brought advantages and disadvantages to the Welsh people. Under the new order an equal system of justice was established as between English and Welsh. But the law was English law, and the Welshman was attached to the statutes of extreme antiquity under which he and his forefathers had lived. Under English law and English administration punishment for crime, and equal justice between man and man, were secured as they had never been before in Wales. And the records of this period furnish abundant evidence of the need for firm and equal justice. Letters, petitions, complaints, are perpetually lodged at this time, in which a man accuses his neighbour of violence or robbery or arson.

The border country with which we are concerned seems to have been particularly rich in these feuds and crimes. But while bestowing the great gift of equal justice (in the main) on Wales, the English law-givers added restrictions and prohibitions infinitely more galling to the Welsh people than any Englishman of that day could understand. Any one who knows anything of Welsh history and literature knows how dear an institution the minstrel was, and how closely bound up with the life of the people. These minstrels not only went from house to house, but also attended the "commerthes"—a

kind of gathering or fair—at which they were one of the chief attractions. The English law-givers regarded these gatherings as the Welshman's opportunity for combination and rebellion, and suppressed them wherever they could. It was "provided, for the eschewing of many mischiefs happening in the land of Wales, by many wasters, rymers, mynstrells and vagabonds, that [no] waster, rymer, mynstrell nor vagabond be in wise susteyned in Wales to make comerthies or gatherings upon the people there."[1] The measure of the English sympathy and understanding of the position of the minstrel in the life of the Welsh people may be taken from the above classification, in which he and the "rymer" are sandwiched between "wasters" and "vagabonds." The Act of Union avowedly aimed, amongst other things, at the extirpation of the Welsh language. How little this, or any later attempts of the kind, succeeded may be seen to-day.

Under this Act five new Welsh counties—Denbigh, Montgomery, Radnor, Brecknock, and Monmouth—were formed from the March country, and constituted an unbroken line from the Dee to the Severn. Not all the march lands were included in these counties. Some were added to the English border counties, and some to the older Welsh ones. Under the new divisions Chirkland fell almost wholly into the county of Denbigh.

One of the chief advantages that Wales derived from the union was that under the new political equality the Welsh counties and towns sent members to Parliament.

[1] From Papers relating to the Government of Wales (Henry VIII) Cottonian MSS., British Museum.

The measures directed against Welsh national feeling and institutions were made doubly hard by the severity with which Thomas Cromwell administered them. At this time he was at the height of his power, and all England groaned under his tyranny.

One result of the union was to bring Welshmen under the tender mercies of the Star Chamber. We find the following in the Public Records of the reign:

"Item, an Act (to be passed in this Parliament) that murders don' and com'ytted in Wales or the marches may be examyned in the Sterr chambre, and the murderers there to be convycte by witnes and have judgement to suffer like as if they had ben founde giltie by 12 men according to the lawes of this realm."[1]

The prohibition from holding office is re-affirmed. "Item: a bill for the justices of Wales, and that no Welshman to be any officer according to the old lawes of this land."[2]

Chirkland is mentioned in the Act of Union.

In the *History of the Gwydir Family*, by Sir John Wynne,[3] we have exceptionally vivid pictures of the condition of things on the borders in the time of Henry VIII and later. The writer speaks of events that had happened only a few years earlier, the account of which he may have heard from eye-witnesses. As a member of the Council of the Marches of Wales he must have been much in the districts about which he writes.

[1] Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Born 1553, died 1626. He was member for Carnarvon County in 1596.

Writing of the period immediately preceding Henry VIII's incorporation of Wales with England, he says: "Soe bloody and ireful were quarrels in those days, and the revenge of the sword at such libertie, that almost nothing was punished by law whatever happened." He recounts an episode that illustrates this fact so vividly, and is at the same time so full of humour, as to be worth giving at some length. He explains, before telling the story, that "In those days in Chirkelande and Oswaldstreeland[1] two sects or kindred contended for the soveraignty of the countrie, and were at continual strife with one another: the Kuffins[2] and Trevors. They had their alliance, partizans and friends in all the countrys round thereabouts, to whome, as the manner of the time was, they sent such of their followers as committed murther or manslaughter, which were safely kept as very precious jewells; and they received the like from their friends. These kind of people were stowed in the day time in chambers in their houses, and in the night they went to the next wine-house that belonged to the gentleman, or to his tenants' houses not far off, to make merrie." He then proceeds with his story and tells us how the wife of Howell ap Rhys ap Howell Vaughan was "sore grieved" with the parson of Llanvrothen because he had taken a child of her husband's enemy (Ieuan ap Robert) "to foster." Her ground for indignation appears to have been that her husband had more land in that parish than Ieuan ap Robert, and that—being people of more importance—their child should have been chosen for adoption. (The mere modern would have imagined the poorer man to have the better claim, but not so the wife of Howell ap

[1] Oswestry-land. [2] Kyffins.

Rhys.) This formidable lady thereupon decided that so injudicious a parson must be removed without delay, and proceeded to bring a false accusation against him, and to incite her brothers to murder him. The story continues—in Sir John Wynne's words—as follows: "This woman had her brethren, three notable rogues of the crew, fit for any mischief, being followers of Howell ap Rhys. In a morning these brethren watched the parson, as he went to look to his cattle in a place in that parish called Gogo yr Llechwin, and there murthered him; and two of them fled into Chirkelande in Denbighshire to some of the Trevors, who were friends or of a kinne to Howell ap Rhys or his wyfe. It was the manner in those days that the murtherer only and he that gave the death's wound should flie, which was called in Welsh 'llawrudd,' which is a red hand, because he had blooded his hand. Ieuan ap Robert [whose child had been adopted by the unlucky parson] going to his friends the Kyffins of Chirkelande, caught the two llawrudds, but the latter advised him not to convey them out of the country (as he wished) by reason that the faction of the Trevors would lay the way and narrow passages of the country; and, if they were brought to Chirke Castle gate, to receive the triall of the country lawes, it was lawful for the offender's friends whosoever they were, to bring £5 for every man for a fine to the lord to acquit him, so it were not in cases of treason. Thereupon Ieuan ap Robert ap Meredith commanded one of his men to strike off their heads, which the fellow doing faintly, the offender told him that if *he* laide his neck under *his* sworde he would make his sword take a better edge than he did; whereupon Ieuan ap Robert in

a rage, stepping to them, struck off their heads." It is quite impossible to withhold one's sympathy from this sturdy ruffian in his last moments, as he fires off his gallant jest with the sword on his neck.

In Henry VII's reign the "Court of the Council of the Marches of Wales," which had been established by the House of York, was made permanent, and had its sittings at Ludlow. "Its work was to execute justice on felons, to suppress riots, and to hear the complaints of all poor Welsh persons oppressed or wronged, as well as the complaints of the English in the English shires." Under Rowland Lee, Bishop of Coventry, who was President from 1534 to 1543, the court wielded immense power. The bishop seems to have been a man after Thomas Cromwell's heart. "He travelled through the districts of Rhaiadr and Brecon, and thoroughly enjoyed himself in the thick of the thieves. Not even death could snatch his prey from the relentless bishop; dead bodies were brought in sacks on horseback to swing on the Ludlow gibbets. It was a wild, superstitious neighbourhood, and the ghastly procession with the sack carried far greater terror than an army which could dispense a more summary kind of justice."[1]

An account written only thirty-two years after Bishop Rowland Lee's death[2] gives a vivid picture of his strong but ruthless character, and the terror produced by what the Chronicles (with unconscious irony) describes as the "virtue of learning." "Rowlande Bushoppe

[1] Owen Edwards' *Wales*.

[2] See *The Court of the President and Council of Wales and the Marches from* 1478 *to* 1575, by David Lewis, Recorder of Swansea. *Y. Cymmrodor*, vol. xii.

of Coventrie and Leechfielde, called Busshoppe Rowlande, who was stowte of nature, readie witted, roughe in speech, not affable to anye of the Walshrie, an extreme severe ponisher of offenders, desirous to gayne (as he did in deede) credit with the Kinge and commendacion for his service. . . . this stowte busshoppe's dealinge and the terror that the vertue of learninge worketh in the subjecte when he perceiveth that he is governed under a lerned Magistrate within three or four yeres generallie soe terrefied theyme, as the very feare of ponishement rather than the desire or love that the people hadd to channge their Walshrie wroughte firste in theym the obedience theye nowe bee growen into."[1]

A letter written in 1536 by this same Rowland Lee, Bishop of Coventry, to Thomas Cromwell, gives us a glimpse into the condition of things on the borders with which the English law-givers had to cope. Clearly their task was no light one. The bishop writes: "John Trevor, of Oswestry, gent. who was sent for to the Council for assisting to burn a man's house in Chirkland, and through negligence made his escape, has gone to the wood with Robert ap Morice."[2] That phrase "has gone to the wood" gives us the situation in a nutshell. It was much the same, as regards individuals, as that with which the English armies had to deal in their struggles with Welsh forces. The Welshman was at home. When hiding from the English law he had every

[1] *Discourses* of William Gerard, Judge of the Court of Great Sessions in South Wales, in the reign of Elizabeth. Quoted in Mr. D. Lewis's article.

[2] Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Rolls Series, Henry VIII.

other Welshman on his side—with the exception perhaps of those of his own countrymen with whom he happened to have a bitter family feud at the moment—and friends were ready to hide him in lonely spots unknown to the English. Above all "the wood" was always a safe refuge. The thickly-wooded hills that lay between Chirk and Llangollen supplied a "cover" in which he was perfectly at home, and into which the emissaries of "the Council" were little likely to follow him.

A second letter from the bishop to Thomas Cromwell and Sir T. Englefield deals with similar matters, though whether it is the same case of house-burning or another is not clear. The delinquents appear to have had "friends at Court." "According to your letters to the Council," writes the bishop, "we have had the officers of Chirk before us, and examined the matter of the persons of Powes [Powys]. We also have sent to Sir R. Herbert for his knowledge touching the men of Chirke, which we send. Though we made haste to save them on receipt of your letter, two were already hanged on good ground for burning a house. So should they have been who stole the sheep."[1]

The bishop's task was clearly no sinecure. Two years later a pardon is granted him for the escape of "Gruffyth ap Ieuan ap John ap Dio, late of Glyn Vechan in the lordship of Chirke, chaplin lately detained in his [the bishop's] prison as clerk attainted."[2] 1538.

A "book of the able men" mustered by Edward Almer, Deputy Steward of the lordships of Bromfield, Yale, and March 1539.

[1] Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.
[2] *Ibid.*

Chirkland, is interesting for the sake of the classification, which shows the weapons used. First comes a list of "able men" who have "harness," then follows a list of able men without harness, classified again as bow-men, bill-men, spear-men, and "poor men having no weapons."

April 1539. In this same year there is a grant to Geofrey Bromefield, one of the King's Yeomen of the Guard, to be "keeper of the wood growing in the pasture or park called the Little Parke, in the lordship of Chyrke, near the castle there, from the death of John Trevour, with 40*s.* a year and the herbage and pannage of the said wood and parke."[1]

A letter from Bishop Rowland to Thomas Cromwell bears witness to the state of decay into which the border castles had fallen, and gives, incidentally, a melancholy glimpse into the process of destruction which was going on among the suppressed abbeys. When we see a bishop asking, apparently with no sense of sin, for the stone and lead of one of these abbeys to use for repairing castles, the only wonder is that so many glorious fragments have escaped, to witness to us of a beauty which seems wholly out of our reach to-day.

The bishop writes from Wigmore Castle: "If I might have the warrant for the stone and lead of the late suppressed abbey here, I would do reparations both here and at Ludlow. There is a piece of Brecknoke Castle fallen, and another piece at Chyrke, and all must be done: God send money!"[2]

It must be owned, in some extenuation of the bishop's vandalism, that he was in a very unpleasant position—with four castles to repair, and no money to do it with.

[1] Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.

[2] *Ibid.*

In 1543 a certain Vryen Brereley "one of the gromes of the Kynge's moste honorable privey chamber" deputes his office of Constable of Chirk Castle to John Edwards of Chirk. When divested of vast quantities of superfluous legal phraseology the gist of the document is as follows: "To all men unto whom this present wrytinge shall come, Vryen Brereley, one of the gromes of the Kynge's moste honorable privey chamber sends gretinge. Whereas our Sovereigne lord the Kynge by his most gracious letters patentes under his gracis great seale of England of his grace and special goodnes hath gevyn and granted unto me the office of the Constable of the Castell of Chirk in the countrie of Denbigh, to have to hold etc. etc. . . . knowe yowe me the said Vryen for certayne resonable causes me movinge have ordeyned . . . my welbelovid Frynd John Edwards of Chirk . . . my juste true and lawfull Deputie . . . for the exercisinge of my said office of Constable of the said Castell, to have hold, etc. etc. . . . with the Fee of twentye shillings stirlinges by yere of my standinge wages and Fees of the said office to be paid unto the said John his Deputies or Assignes etc. etc. In witness whereof I the said Vryen have put my Seall at Westminster, the 26th day of Januarie in the xxxvth yere of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Kynge Henry the eight."[1]

[1] Puleston MSS.

CONTEMPORARY DESCRIPTIONS OF CHIRKLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

1568. THERE exists a curious old account of the confines of Chirkland taken in the eleventh year of Elizabeth's reign. It is of too great length, and not of sufficient interest, to quote in full. In the course of tracing the confines the following phrases occur: "And thence following the said brooke of Keiriog towards the west, ascending towards a certain ditch called Clewdd Offa[1] being at the north-west corner of a parcel of ground called Parke Bron-y-Garth, etc." This mention of Bron-y-garth as a "Parke" does not occur in the other documents of the lordship.

But the most curious feature of the account is its allusion to the Castle as "ruinous." In view of the thorough repairs executed by Sir William Stanley, followed by those in 1529—of the magnitude of which we have full evidence in the building accounts previously given—it is difficult to believe in the accuracy of this description. The phrase "they say," occurring in the following paragraph, confirms the suspicion that the writer of the account was relying on hearsay for his facts. The account runs: "Item . . . they say that there is

[1] Offa's Dyke.

L.
Tuesday 22 July His Grace the Duke of Beaufort & Earle of
Worcester Sr John Talbot and the Gentry of the county of Denbigh
went to Llangollen or Llanarthlen (3 miles from Chirk Castle) famous
for a Bridge of four arches founded on a rock in the river
near which in a large greek the Militia Foot of Denbigh shire
were drawn up with the Horse, the which after his Grace had seen
exercised he went to Dinastry
The Seat of Sr John
Wynne Barnett. 3 miles further neer which at Rue Abbey
Mace as at Llangollen was again shouldered the Officers of his Grace
family Sheriff of Ludlow and the rest of his Graces servants & attendants
marching before him into this Town in their order. Here his Grace
was most nobly entertained by the right Reverend Father in God
Wm Lloyd Lord Bishop of St Asaph with several Gentlemen
of the Clergy and the Gentry of the countries who were all nobly entertained by the said Sr John Wynn

A DRAWING OF CHIRK CASTLE

From "The Duke of Beaufort's Progress through Wales" in the eighteenth century

within the said lordship one ruinous Castle, called Chirk Castle, which is greatly in decay, and raised [razed] to the ground saving one tower, here commonly called Adam's Tower, which is covered with lead, which lead containeth by estimation two foder. . . . Item: they say that there is alsoe within the said Lordship an ancient borough, called the Borough of Chirk, wherein is twenty-four burgesses in decay." With this last cheerful phrase the description of Chirk concludes. Presumably the writer omitted to pay a personal visit to the "ruinous" castle and the "twenty-four burgesses in decay." His hearsay accounts must have been greatly exaggerated. If they were not, then either Lord St. John of Bletso, or Sir Thomas Myddelton the elder, must have rebuilt the entire castle—a great work of which some builders' accounts would have been practically certain to have been preserved.[1]

This same account gives "the six comots or manors" into which Chirkland was divided. Each of these was again subdivided. The subdivisions of the Manor of Isclawdd are as follows:[2]

Ringild Manor de Isclawdd [Commote or Manor]

Bryn Kynallt	Pen y Clawdd
Y Waen et Vaerdre	
Gwern Ospin	Trevor Issa
Hendregeginen	Trevor Ucha
Manatton	Dinbryn

[1] It is quite possible that such accounts exist or have existed in private hands.

[2] The spelling is here given as it appears in the old account.

Manor of Glyn

Crogen Iddon	Crogen Wladis
Nantgwrid	
Havod Gynvor	Erwallo
Tal y Garth	Cilcochwyn

Chirkland was given by Queen Elizabeth to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. His possession in 1577 is proved by certain grants of land by him in that year, "leave of the Crown having been had by Letter Patent of 9 July last, to hold in free and common socage as of the Castle of Chirk." The manuscript of this grant is signed by the earl himself.[1]

In 1587 Thomas Churchyard, a poet of considerable reputation at the time, made a journey through Wales, and has left us the record in a poem called *The Worthiness of Wales.* Much of it can scarcely be treated seriously as poetry, but even where it falls to the level of doggerel it has usually a quaintness of its own, and as a contemporary record of things actually seen is of great value. At places it rises to genuine poetic feeling —for instance where the writer is inspired by the beauty of the views from the hills surrounding the Ceiriog Valley.

The title-page is refreshingly expansive:

"The Worthiness of Wales:
A POEM

A true note of the ancient Castles, famous Monuments, goodly Rivers, faire Bridges, fine Townes, and Courteous People, that I have seen in the noble Countrie of Wales."

[1] MS. Brit. Museum [1247] 8487 Additional Charters. This document is dated 20 May, 19 Elizabeth.

There is a lengthy dedication to Queen Elizabeth, in which the author expresses the estimate he has formed of the Welsh people of that period in their relations with one another: "And such regard they have one of another," he writes, "that neither in market townes, highways, meetings, nor public assemblies they strive not for place, nor shewe any kind of roystering: for insted of such high stomackes and stoutnes they use friendly salutations and courtesie."

In view of the information we have from other contemporary sources regarding the prevalence of violent feuds between Welshman and Welshman on the borders at the time of which he is writing, we can only conclude, either that Churchyard was in a holiday humour and prepared to see everything through rose-coloured spectacles, or else that, like many another traveller before and since, he generalized with happy self-confidence on the results of a few weeks' observation. Personal and national valour, love of independence, appreciation of poetry and music, a strong religious sense—all these great qualities distinguished the Welshman of Elizabeth's time as they distinguish his successor to-day. But his best friend would scarcely have ventured to assert of him that he always lived peaceably with his neighbours.

Churchyard's defence of the accuracy of his historical facts is so quaint and naive as to be worth inserting here, although it has no bearing upon his personal impressions of Oswestry and Chirk. He begins explaining his object in writing the poem:

> "This was set downe, for causes more than one.
> The world beleeves no more than it hath seene:
> When things lye dead and tyme is passed and gone

Blynd people say: 'It is not so we weene
It is a tale devisde to please the eare,
More for delight of toyes than truth may beare.'
But those that thinke this may a fable be
To authors good I send them here from me.

First let them search records as I have done,
Then shall they find this is most certain true,
And all the rest, before I here began
Is taken out, not of no authors nue.
The oldest sort and soundest men of skill
Myne authors are, now read their names who will.
Their works, their words, and so their learning through
Shall shew you all what troth I write of now."

Oswestry, as the market town, has always played so large a part in the life of Chirkland that we are much indebted to Thomas Churchyard for a description of town and market as they appeared to a traveller in Elizabeth's reign.

A description of Oswestry.

"As Ozwestry, a pretie towne full fine,
Which may be lov'd, be likte and praysèd both.
It stands so trim, and is maintayned so cleane,
And peopled is with folke that well doe meane:
That it deserves to be enrould and shryned
In each good breast, and every manly mynde.

Oswestry market.

The market there, so farre exceedes withall
As no one towne comes neere it in some sort.
For looke what may be wisht or had at call,
It is there found, as market men report.

"Poultrie and foule."

For poultrie, foule, of every kind somewhat,
No place can shewe, so much more cheape than that:
All kinds of cates that countrie can afford
For money there, is bought with one bare word."

Of the journey from Llangollen to Chirk over the hills, Churchyard writes:

"From thence[1] to Chirke are mountaynes all a rowe,
As though in ranke and battaile mountaynes stood,
And over them the bitter wind doth blowe,
And whirls betwixt the valley and the wood.
Chirke is a place that parts another sheere,
And as by trench and mount doth well appeare,
It kept those bounds from forayne force and power
That men might sleep in suretie every hower.

I entered first at Chirke, right ore a brooke,
Where staying still, on countrey well to looke,
A Castle fayre appeerde to sight of eye Chirk Castle.
Whose walles were gret and towers both large and hye.

Full underneath the same doth Keeryock run "Keeryock."
A raging brooke, when rayne or snow is greate:
It was some prince that first this house begun,
It shewes farre off to be so brave a seate.
On side of hill it stands most trim to vewe,
An old strong place, a castle nothing newe.
A goodly thing, a princely pallace yet,
If all within were thoroughly furnished fit.

On hill we vewe farre of both field and flood,
Feele heate or cold, and so sucke up sweet ayre,
Behold beneath great wealth and worldly good,
See wallèd townes and looke on countries fayre.
And whoso sits or stands on mountain hye
Hath half a world in compasse of his eye:
A platform made of nature for the nonce,
Where man may look on all the earth at once."

Those who know the extreme beauty and great extent of the views from the hills overlooking the Ceiriog valley will grant that many a greater poet might fail to give so true an impression as this simple verse conveys.

An indenture towards the end of Elizabeth's reign is 1590.
of local interest, as supplying some curious details relat-

[1] Llangollen.

ing to the leasing of a watercourse for a fulling mill in Bron-y-garth. "John Edwardes of Chirk, Esquire, grants and lets farm to David ap Roger the water-course out of the river of Keryog which runs upon the lands of the said John Edwardes within the town of Waun[1] and Vaerdre, co. Denbigh, to serve the fulling mill of the said David ap Roger in the town of Bronygarth co. Salop." David is to pay *2s.* rent per annum, and if the rent should remain unpaid within eight days of the feasts of the Annunciation and Michaelmas then the said John or his heirs at their pleasure "ymediatlie shall entre and breke downe to the myddyste of the said Ryver of Keriog, being adjonyng land anynste the landes of the said John Edwardes, all the said watter course and all maner hedges, stakes, and stones, whyche be ther sett for the turnyng of the said watter course."[2]

After the Earl of Leicester's death Chirk came into the possession of Lord St. John of Bletso, whose son sold it in 1595 to Sir Thomas Myddelton, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1614.[3] It was this Sir Thomas who, in conjunction with Rowland Heylin (another London alderman) and others, brought out in 1630 the first popular edition of the Bible in Welsh. A Welsh translation had been printed in Elizabeth's time, but the copies were very scarce and did not circulate among the people.[4]

[1] Waun = Chirk.

[2] Puleston MSS.

[3] See the *Civil War in Wales and the Marches*, by S. Roland Phillips.

[4] Misled by Rowland's *Welsh Bibliography*, Phillips attributes this translation of the Bible to Sir Thomas Myddelton's son, the Parliamentary General. The mistake in the *Bibliography* has now been corrected by the Rev. T. Shankland, Welsh Librarian of University College, Bangor.

The following is translated from the Introduction or Preface to the 1630 Bible.

"Behold, now the Bible and all the Forms of Common Prayer is presented to thee, in a volume of decent size, and easy to carry. And here you must acknowledge gratefully the great care and cost of certain pious and honourable citizens and merchants of London (among whom chiefly and specially are Sir Thomas Myddelton an honourable Knight, and Rowland Heylin—two Aldermen of the said city) May God in His goodness remember them and all others who, in simplicity of good faithful hearts, are wishing and doing good to his Zion."

This Sir Thomas, the Alderman, having bought the Chirk estates in 1595, settled them upon his son—the Sir Thomas who afterwards became the Parliamentary General—on his marriage in 1612.

GLIMPSES OF CHIRK CASTLE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A LARGE number of accounts of Chirk Castle expenses in the seventeenth century have been preserved, and contain matter of extreme value and interest.[1] These accounts not only present vivid pictures of life at this period in a great house—with many side-lights on the life of the people outside—they also, as the Civil War progresses, show in numberless ways how Chirk and its people were affected by the struggle. When we read of garrison expenses; of levies for support of the soldiers, and of cloth bought at Oswestry for their use; of a sum "for 6 horses taken from the Cavelleeres at Llangollen"; of money paid to soldiers, "being forced —they refusing to leave my [the account-keeper's] house till they were paid"; and of "an assessment to the use of the Trayned band Souldiers at Worcester fight"—these things bring home to the imagination, as no general statement will do, that Chirk and its people were in the thick of the struggle. We have glimpses of Parliamentary generals, with their troopers, who "went by the garden," and of an election in which "tape" is bought "to tye to the great bay horse his tayle." Sir Thomas (the Parlia-

[1] These accounts have been edited, annotated, and privately printed in 1908 by Mr. W. M. Myddelton, to whose kindness I am indebted for permission to quote from them. When one of Mr. W. M. Myddelton's footnotes is quoted, the initials W. M. M. will be appended. The original spelling is preserved.

mentary General) sends up to London for the "Lord Protector's declaration concerninge the forme of Gov'-ment"; and an Arabian horse is sent from Chirk Castle for Cromwell's use. One entry brings us very close to Milton and the great fight for religious liberty, as we read how General Myddelton sends £5—equal, at the very lowest computation, to £22 of our money to-day—for "distressed Protestants in the Dukedom of Savoy."[1]

Then comes the turn of the tide, and carries the General with it. We find him sending a "letter to Coll Mostyn to acquaint him and the rest of the gentry in fflintshire that Coll Lambert was in Armes and proclaymed Traytor." The last note is struck in the entry of a sum of money "paid to the ringers in token of our joye for the Parliament resolves to send for the Kinge."[2]

We now return to the time before Sir Thomas the elder had handed over Chirk Castle and lands to his son. The following are a few entries in the accounts for the opening years of the century.

	£	s.	d.	
"Item for 2 Runnletts of sack the won contayning aleaven galones and the other six gallones and a halff, at 3*s.* 4*d.* the galon and the 2 runnletts 2*s.* 4*d.*	3	8	0	1605.

[1] Milton's great sonnet, *Avenge O Lord thy slaughtered Saints*, has immortalized the heroism and sufferings of the Piedmontese who were massacred for their religious beliefs. Cromwell commanded a national fast and contribution which reached the sum of £40,000. Moreover, he used the immense prestige and fear of England's power—built up by his commanding personality and his invincible troops—to put a stop to the persecutions.

[2] The extracts will be inserted according to their dates.

		£	s.	d.
1608.	Aug. 1. Item delivered unto Mr. Thorp, son to my Ladey[1] and Mr. Robearts thayer compeny att the Eatinge of the venson dynner and sopper upon a toskn [token] from my Ladey to be at the chardges of my Ladey		8	0
1609.	July 29. Layd out for Crossbowe and Arowes for the Keep		2	0
	Item: att the tyme you had a cart come from London yo[r] men the driveares thereof the whele of the cart went over a swyne and did kill the swyne, so to ryde [rid] and make amend of the trouble in that matter, I layd out		3	0
1614.	Payd for 10 bulox at the Hoult fayr	18	12	4
1616.	Payd to Brook the Keep [keeper] of Black Pke [Park]	1	0	0
	Payd Captn. William Myddelton[2] to pay sister Ellen Myddelton for his diett duringe the tyme he lay sicke at Denbigh	3	12	0
1617.	Payd for a Caulf according to yo[r] wor: directions		8	0

[1] Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Rich. Brooke, widow of (1) Miles Hobart and (2) Richard Thorpe, and (3) third wife of Sir Thos. Myddelton the elder.—W. M. M.

[2] Who translated the Psalms into Welsh metre. It is said that he, with Capt. Thos. Price of Plasyollin, and one Capt. Koet (Huet) were the first who smoked (or as they called it "drank") tobacco publicly in London. Pipes were not then invented, so they used the twisted leaves, or "segars" (Pennant's *Wales*, ii, p. 33; quoted by W. M. Myddelton).

	£	s.	d.	
Payd the Scholemaster of Chirke according to yo[r] wor: directions his quarters wages due at Michaelmas last		5	0	
Item: Payd for the tyth of Crogen Wladis	9.	0.	0	
Payd according to yo[r] wor: directions to the use of younge Sir Thomas	100	0	0	1618.

At this point the accounts of Sir Thomas the elder come to an end, and those of his son take their place. This would seem to point to the probability that the son was practically in possession at the Castle before he was formally installed in 1612.[1]

An inventory has been preserved[2] of the elder Sir Thomas's goods "as were remayning in Chirke Castle in Wales." The list is very interesting and entertaining, and gives exactly that kind of detail which helps us to reconstruct something of the private life of the time. The wording, "as were remayning in Chirke Castle in Wales," suggests that the articles catalogued were left behind in the Castle when Sir Thomas handed it over to his son on his marriage.

[1] From this point onward, when Sir Thomas is spoken of it is Sir Thomas the younger, who becomes the Parliamentary General.

[2] In the Wittwronge archives at Roehamsted. Sir Thomas married, as his fourth wife, Mrs. Jacob Wittwronge, and thus the inventory came to be among the family papers. It was published by Lady Lawes-Wittwronge in an article in *The Home Counties Magazine*, and subsequently quoted in the "Bygones" column of the *Oswestry Advertizer*.

THE INVENTORY

"Goods of the Testator as were remayninge at Chirke Castle in Wales as followeth viz:

In the Studdy in Adam's Tower

Imprimis: one Bible.

In the Studdy over the Larder

Item: A plain court cupboard.

In younge Sir Thomas his chamber

Item: 9 pieces of tapestrie hangings, a leather carpet, one fawchine. Item: an ould court cupboard.

In the Nursery

Item: 2 bedsteds. Item: an ould canopie, a court cupboard.

In the Armoury

Item: ould armour and other ould things.

In the newe Dininge roome

Item: one court cupboard. Item: one picture of the ould Lady Myddelton.

In the Hall

Item: two longe tables, one court cupboard.

In the Hall Chamber

Item: one ould greene cadowe, and 2 ould blankets.

Item: one small presse, one paire of slippers, and 4 paires of shoes.

Item: one bar of steele and one umbrella.

Item: Boxes and basketts and other small [? articles].

In Sir Thos: chamber in Adam's Tower

Item: one bedsted, curtaines and valence, one fether bed, one pillow, one blanket and one Tapestry covering.

Item: one halfe headed bedsted, fetherbed, and bolster.

Item: 2 small tables and one court cupboard.

Item: one paire of velvet hose and jerkin, one satten doublet and a taffety jerkin.

Item: one grogram gowne.

Item: one ould trunke and a stoole.[1]

In Mr. Hatfield's chamber

Item: a half hedded bed, a court cupboard.

In the Clock House

Item: the clock and bell.

In the new Kitchin

Item: a beame and scales and weights.

Item: one longe gunne.

Sir Walter Leech, his chamber in the inner roome

Item: 4 peeces of tapestrie hangings.

Item: in ould pewter 48 lbs. at 8*d.*

Item: in ould plate waying as appears in all 252 ounces at 5*s.* 1*d.* per ounce.

The particulars of the plate

1. Bason and eure.
2. One spoutpott.
3. One beaker.
4. One guilt salt with a cover.

[1] "From this point the inventory at Roehamsted is imperfect and the following copy is most kindly given by Mr. W. M. Myddelton of St. Albans, who transcribed it from the original at Chirk Castle." [Note by Lady Lawes-Wittwronge.]

5. One guilt salt without a cover.
6. Two guilt cannes.
7. Eleven guilt spoones.
8. Eight plaine spoones.
9. Four beare boweles.
10. Three wine cuppes.

(Preysed by us: John Edwards, Hen. Dixon.)

The accounts of "young Sir Thomas" begin in 1608, four years before his marriage and installation at Chirk. The details relating to a suit of "tauney satton" furnish such a minute picture of the ceremonial dress of a gentleman of that time as we seldom have the good fortune to come across.

	£	s.	d.
1608. Sir Thomas' suit of clothes. *Dec.* 14. Item for 9 yards of tauney satton in grayn to make your sute at 15*s.*	6	15	0
For 4 els half of taffete to cut with yo[r] outfid and to face it at 13*s.* 4*d.*	3	0	0
For 4 els of taffete sasnet to draw yo[r] sute out at 8*s.*	1	12	0
For 9 ounces of lase to your sute at 2*s.* 10*d.*	1	5	6
For 2 ounces of silke to that sute		4	8
For buttons to it		1	4
For loope lase to it and a waste band			6
For ribbon to your hose knees			8
For 7 yards of fustian to lyne it		7	0
For canvis and stiffening to it		4	6
For 9 yards of cotton to your hose at 9*d.*		6	9
For bease to yo[r] sleves		1	0
For making of yo[r] sute of satton		12	0
For cutting of it [1]		2	0

[1] Authorities differ widely as to the number by which money of

Items of personal adornment are frequent in the next two or three years, and raise the speculation as to how Sir Thomas enjoyed the change to soberer costumes which must have come as he became more and more identified with the cause of the Parliament.

	£	s.	d.	
For ribbon to yo^{r} knees			8	1609.
For poyntes to yo^{r} coller		1	5	
For a waste band to yo^{r} hose			3	
For loope lase to yo^{r} knees			2	
For ribbon to ty yo^{r} girdell			6	
For 2 dossen of poyntes to crose wth all		5	0	
Item 1 Rapier and dagger	5	2	6	Feb.
„ 1 paire of carnacō silck stockings	2	6	0	
„ 1 „ garters and Roses		8	0	
„ 1 „ falling band with lace & ruffles	1	0	0	
„ 1 „ of wrought boote hose tops	1	0	0	
„ 1 „ gloves with ffringe	1	3	0	
„ for doublet and hose to yo^{r} man	2	16	0	
„ for black bever hat to cosen Cooper	2	4	0	
„ for 1 doz. ribbon pointes for boote hose		3	0	
„ paid to Mr. Rob^{t} Myddelton for Ruffe bands	2	7	0	
„ 6 plaine falling bands and cuffes	1	5	6	
„ 2 doz. of carnacō and black silck points		5	6	
„ 1 doz. of plaine Holland handkerchers		14	0	

In the following year much light is thrown on the 1610.

this period should be multiplied to give an equivalent in the money of to-day. The lowest computation places it at four and a half, but some authorities give a much higher figure.

elaborate costumes, for we find Sir Thomas paying his addresses to a lady in Yorkshire [1] whom he marries two years later. The climax is reached when a pair of embroidered gloves costing £2. 10*s.* (equal to at least £11. 5*s.* of our money) was "sent into Yorkshire"—presumably as a gift to the lady.

Two years later comes the wedding. The Castle accounts of this time contain among other things of interest a full list of all the details of an elaborate riding outfit and trappings for a great occasion. The ornamentation is so profuse (including a "stirropp embroydered," costing 15*s.*, that it seems clear that the outfit must have been for the lady.

Later on we come to the expense of the journey from Yorkshire to Chirk, with halts at Halifax, Manchester, and Chester, and numerous quaint details throwing light on the costumes of the day—even on the methods of dentistry then in vogue.

		£	*s.*	*d.*
1612. Aprill.	Item for 2 wrought cappes with silck and gold and one with black silcke	3	0	0
	Item for 2 doz. of silck points		4	6
June 20th.	Paid to Nicholas . . hichester for a gold diamond given to Mrs. Margaret	22	0	0
	Paid for 5 doz. of blacke and gold twist	1	2	0
	Pd for 22 doz. and 6 great tassels for the cloth and Harnes at 4*s.* the dozen	4	17	0
	Paid for a false Raines of gold and naples Silck	2	5	0
	ffor 2 doz. and 4 gold buttons and loopes	2	5	0

[1] At this time Sir Thomas was paying his addresses to Margaret, daughter and heiress of George Savile of Wakefield.—W. M. M.

	£	s.	d.	
ffor a head for the saddle imbost, chast and doble gilt	2	5	0	
ffor a stirrop embroydered		15	0	
ffor 7 lbs. of fine downe at 2*s.* 4*d.* the pound		15	0	
ffor 6 doze. of gilte pendance for the harnes		12	0	
ffor a suyte of gilt buckles		9	0	
ffor a Bitt and gilte Bosses		6	0	
ffor 4 oild skinnes of the seate & pannels		4	2	
ffor a yd. qtr of watchet velvet for yo[r] owne saddle	1	7	6	
ffor a yd qtr of sea greene Perpetuano		3	8	
ffor 9 yardes of watchet and gold lace	2	16	10	
Item for yo[r] sarsenet garters and roses	1	13	0	June 23rd.
„ for a paire of girdle and hrugers embroidered	3	10	0	
Item for 2 paires of embroidered gloves for yo[r] sisters	1	10	0	
Item for a band and wyer for Mrs. Margaret		12	0	
„ for a white bever hatt and gold band	3	2	0	
„ for a paire of guilt spurres		5	6	
„ for a Wedding smocke for Mrs. Margarett	3	12	0	
Item to the Horner for winding Hornes		8	0	
Paid to the Cutler for the exchainge of yo[r] hiltes and Pummell of yo[r] old sword	2	0	0	June 29th.
Paid for spurre leathers			8	
Paid for a sute of apparell for yo[r] foote boy	2	0	0	
Given Wm. Morris in money to buy him a paire of weddinge gloves		10	0	
Given to Capt. Will [Myddelton] for a horseman's saddle	1	0	0	

		£	s.	d.
	Given him to buy him a paire of weddinge gloves		10	0
	Paid for a laced band sent to my Lady	1	6	0
	Paid for a Drum 35*s.* and for a case for yt 5*s.*	2	0	0
	Paid for a paire of Beare Pistoles		5	0
July 2.	Item for 3 yards of silver grogram to yo[r] dublet at 22*s.*	3	6	0
	For 8 yards of crimson satton to make yo hose at 16*s.*	6	8	0
	Item for 3 ells of white taffete sasnet to draw out yo[r] hose at 8*s.*	1	4	0
	Item for 5 doz. of goulde buttons at 14*d.*		5	10
	„ for 4 els of rich black taffete to make yr Cloke at 18*s.* 6*d.*	3	14	0
July 10.	Laid out for yo[r] sister Salusbery by yr direction	2	9	0
	To John Thorpe for a tercel of a Gosse haulke and 2 Gosse hawks	2	0	0
	For bringinge them beyond the seas £1. 1*s.* 0*d.*, for keeping them in London £1, for sendinge them to Yorkeshyre £1	3	1	0
	For 2 pair of gloves for Capt. D. D. [Myddelton] and his wife	1	6	0
	Item 10 yardes of mingled coloured Karsey at six shillings sixpence the yeard	3	5	0
	To Joanes the Distiller of waters for quintescene and other waters	1	11	6
	For a Booke called Plowden [1]		12	0

[1] Evidently a law book by Edmond Plowden the jurist.—W. M. M.

	£	s.	d.	
for a case for yo^{r} vyall		5	0	
Item for Capt. D. D. Myddelton's £100	10	0	0	
Item for wedding gloves for the Lady Savell[1] £19, more for gloves per error £3 8*s.* 0*d.*	22	8	0	
Item for a suite of apparrell for Sir George Savell	15	7	0	

A note booke for all my expenses sithence I was married[2] *w^{ch} was the 29th July* 1612.

ffor the licenses and for fees	1	10	0	
Imprimis given to Mr. Whitakers the yonger for marrying us	2	0	0	
Item to the clarke		5	0	
Item to the poor		5	0	
Item my charges going and coming fr. York		8	0	
Item to the barbor for pulling out a tooth		0	6	August.
Item given another tyme to an other barbor of Halifax for pulling out a tooth		5	0	
Item at Marsden for ale upon the way		4	0	The charges of our journey into Wales.

[1] Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Edward Ayscough, who had married as her second husband Sir George Savile, Bart., of Thornhill, co. York, a kinsman of her first husband, George Savile of Wakefield, the father of Sir Thomas's first wife, Margaret Savile.

[2] Sir Thomas was apparently married to Margaret Savile at Thornhill in Yorkshire by the Rev. Edward Whitakers, who was then rector of that parish. They set out for Chirk on 2nd September following, where they remained until 24th October. Then they returned to Thornhill, where Sir Thomas tells us he kept house. They visited Wales again, and London in the same year, and after the death of his wife he left Yorkshire on 1st February 1613-4.—W. M. M.

		£	s.	d.
	Item for our supper and breakfast at Manchester	4	0	0
The first day's journey.	Item for our horse meate at Manchester	1	7	2
	Item for ribon for my wife at Manchester		4	8
	Item at Tarvin			4
The second o urney.	Item for our supper and breakefast at Chester	4	7	4
	Item for our horse meate at Chester		14	4
	Item for a silver botkin and cutting of a ring		5	0
	Item for a quart of wine and sugar		1	0
	Item for the howse and poore		6	6
	Item to the musitians		7	0
Our charges sithence we came to Wales.	Item for oates for Sir George's horses at Chirk		15	0
	Item for 6 porringers		3	6
	Item for setting sticke			6
	Item given at my uncle Sunderlands at severall tymes before and after marriage		16	0
	Item to Robert Smith, keeper of Emley		6	0
1613. June 26.	My journey to Wales: Item given away at Chirke at my comming thence		15	0
	Item given away at other tymes booth to the poore and others that brought presents		11	0
July 10.	Item given away at my coozen Puliston's howse [1]		7	2
Aug. 1st.	Item payd to six mowers for six dayes work		6	0
	Item for hawks hoods and bells and a bag		4	0
	Item for a lime and coller for my blood-hound		2	0

[1] Emral Hall, Worthenbury.

	£	s.	d.	
Item lost at boules		15	0	
Item paid for 5 dosen of quinces		5	0	Sept. 10.
Item given for hawksmeate at Wakefield			1	
Item payd for beafe for hawksmeate			3	
„ payd for a chicken at Emley			3	
„ payd to Stringer wife for rushes		1	0	
„ for a hart for the hawke			1	

[Then, at the end of 1613, comes the sad entry referring to the death of Sir Thomas's wife, who died with her infant child, a little more than a year after her marriage.]

	£	s.	d.	
Item payd the charges of the grave	2	1	3	Copley.
Item given to the poore of severall parishes at the death of my wife	11	9	6	

In the entries for August and September some interesting food prices occur.

	s.	d.	
Item for a quarter of mutton	1	2	Aug. 14.
„ for seven chickens	1	9	
„ for a mutton of my owne worth	8	0	
„ for a three coople of Rabbetts	2	0	Aug. 21.
„ for a surloyne of beefe	4	6	Aug. 28.
„ for 2 piggs	3	4	
„ for two dossen of pigeons	3	0	
„ for pownd of pruens		2	
„ for 2 ounces of sinamon	1	0	
„ for three geese	2	9	Sept. 4.
„ for cowcombers		2	
„ for three crabes		6	

		£	s.	d.
1614.	June 6 Imprimis: paid to Constable my wife's Tayler the remainder of a bill for her mariag clothes wch in right my mother [in law] should have paid	16	0	0
1619.	*Harvest-moyng hay at Dolwern and other places*			
July 20.	Dd. lloyd 15 dayes	15	0	
	Richard ap Dd. 4 dayes	4	0	
Sept. 11.	Payd for oxe Bowes	3	0	
	Payd for threshing and gettin fern to make malt, John ap John, 6 dayes	3	0	
Oct. 30.	Payd Dd. the joyner scowringe my owld Mr. chamber [my old master's chamber] over the little hall	4	6	

1620. A lawsuit in James I's reign (plaintiff, Sir Thomas Myddelton, jun.; defendants, John Edwards, Esq., of Chirk, and others) is worth notice, because it supplies curious details relating to the transport of coal from the pit-mouth, and also gives approximate dates for the starting of the coal-mines in Chirk.

The point at issue was "concerning the right of way from the King's highway in Pen-y-Clawdd to the Black Park, by means of passing over lands called Yr Hidir, Erw Anghared, and Y Llwyn." The witnesses for the plaintiff (Sir Thomas Myddelton) deposed that about twenty-seven years ago a mine of sea-coal was found in Pen-y-Clawdd, "and for that the same coales were taken up under such a hill and in such a place whereunto noe accesse could be had with cart, oxen or horses, and

therefore they were forced to carry the same coales upon mens backes from the pits unto parte of the way now in question, and were there layde downe on the high waye." They further deposed that there had lately been found a coal mine in the Black Park, and the way now in question was used in carrying the coal. [Sir Thomas being the plaintiff, it follows that the defendants must have closed this road.]

The witnesses for the defendants deposed that the lands through which the road passed were "parcel of the town field called Maes Issa and parcel of the inheritance of the ancestors of John Edwards one of the Defendants." Maes Issa was afterwards enclosed by the owners, and those whose lands were situated within land belonging to other people had leave to pass through their neighbours' land in order to cultivate their own.

The question at issue in the suit was whether this was a common way for all carriages, carts, etc.

The defendant's witnesses deposed that there was a common highway in Pen-y-Clawdd from which a crossway led to certain fields between Captain Edwards' house and the Black Park. It was reported that by reason of the plaintiff carrying coals over and through the said Yr Hidir and Erw Anghared, and of his procuring others to do the same, the soil became so ploughed up that the cattle and horses of some of the poor neighbours "have layne or byn redie to lye in and sticke soe faste in the myre as that they could not gett fourth without help." It was deposed that the neighbours' cattle were endangered carrying coal by the way in question.

It was also deposed that before the plaintiff found coal in the Black Park the price of coal was 2*d.* a horse-

load and 2*s.* a wagon load. Now the plaintiff usually sold his coal for 3*d.* a hundred and 3*s.* a wagon load. What these last facts have to do with the question of the right of way is not apparent.[1]

The following extracts supply interesting details of the indoor and outdoor life of the time in a country house.

		£	*s.*	*d.*
1620. Sep. 15.	Paid to Ned Fenton for 6 measur of wheate to sowe in ye Castle pk		19	0
	Payd for da^li^ gwynpowder to kyl crowes			8
	Payd for 8 hives to put in bees		2	2
1621.	Payd for a dish of Trouts			6
May 31.	Payd David the Joyner for makinge a pewe in the est sid of ye Church	1	5	0
	Payd for woodcocks		3	6
	„ Gweril, for spining		1	0
	„ Howel ap Ieuan for weving		10	0
	„ for dressing the webe		1	0
	Given to Mr. Leighton's man for taminge the two coults		2	0
	Payd for a samont		5	0
	Payd for 2 bottles claret wyne 5*s.* 5*d.*, 1 bottle wt yne 2*s.* 6*d.*, wt bread 12*d.*		8	11
	Payd for 34 yards half inc boords to backe the picture at 2*d.* a yard		5	8
1621.	Payd David for making 2 frames the on for my Lady Ursfield and the other for Mrs. Maudlen making Theophilus a tabl. to work upon, setting up a door on my Lady Ursfield's			

[1] Depositions (Nos. 8 and 9) Denbigh. 19 James I, Michaelmas.

	£	s.	d.	
chamber, setting up ye jacke, mending the kyln door the garden door and other triflin work: 12 dayes		6	0	
Payd for on C [100] of fish at Elsmer [Elsmere] to put in the newe pond and charges		6	6	1622.
Anthony keeping the torkeyes 6 dayes			6	
Given to Sir Richard Price his harper		2	0	
Pd to Mr. Vickar his stipend	10	0	0"	1630.

A curious instance of an appeal to the ancient privileges of Marcher Lordships occurs in 1632. John Green and others of the Parish of Chirk petition the Privy Council against Sir Thomas Myddelton and his tenants for refusing to contribute towards the repair of the church.

Sir Thomas alleged that "the lordship of Chirk is a Lordship Marcher, and hath enjoyed many immunities and privileges tyme out of minde, and amongst others that it had a free Chapell endowed with the Tythe of all ancient Demesne Lands of the Castle there, for the maintenance thereof and of a Chaplaine. And the said Demesnes have bin ever free from any cessment for the reparacion of the Parish Church, and were never rated nor questioned to be rated in the memory of man."[1] The Privy Council finally ordered that Sir Thomas should make a "free gift"—which he had offered to do—towards the repair of the church. This sum appears in the Castle accounts of the year as follows:

[1] Privy Council Register, Charles I, 16 May 1632. Quoted by Caroline A. J. Skeel, D.Lit., in *The Council in the Marches of Wales*.

£ s. d.

1632. July 2. "Received of Mr. watkin Kyffin of Chirk Castle tenn pounds w^ch the Right wo^ll Sr. Tho. Myddelton doeth freely of his owne bountie bestow towards the repaco^n of the parish Church of Chirke 10 0 0"

An order by the King (Charles I) in 1637 commands Sir Thos. Myddelton to "permitt and suffer John Edwardes, sonne and heir of John Edwardes esq. deceased, and his tenants of his Water Corne Mill in Chirke to enjoy the watercourse running by and through the groundes of . . . the said Sir Thos. Myddelton." [1]

(*From the Castle Accounts*)

1637. Dec. 5. "Recd. of Sir Thos. Myddelton Kt one of His Ma^ties Commissioners for the contribution money collected within the County of Denbigh fore repaire of the Cathedrall Church of St. Paul in London £9 6*s.* 6*d.* collected within the division of Nantheidwy . . . being at this time freely given towards the repayring of the decayes and ruines of the sayd Cathedrall."

[1] Puleston MSS. Also in Orders of Court of Wards 551, 10 Nov., 13 Chas. I.

GENERAL SIR THOMAS MYDDELTON

From a print in the British Museum

CHIRK AND THE CIVIL WAR

FROM the outbreak of the war in the summer of 1642 Chirk becomes involved in the great struggle, and takes a fairly prominent part throughout its whole course. This was no doubt partly due to the high position in the Parliamentary army held by General Sir Thomas Myddelton.

Sir Thomas took the side of the Parliament from the start, and urged his countrymen to do the same. He addressed a letter to them to this effect in December, and this action seems to have decided the King to take active measures to counteract his influence. The Shropshire forces were ordered to seize Chirk Castle. This order was carried out by Colonel Ellis in January 1643, and Sir John Watts was made governor. For three years the Castle remained in the hands of the Royalists, and in charge of Sir John Watts,—its owner, as we shall see later, vainly trying to re-take it on one occasion.

At the outset of the war the tide set strongly in favour of the King. The untrained forces of the Parliament were quite unable to withstand the onslaught of Prince Rupert's cavalry, consisting as it did in the main of country gentlemen and their servants, trained from their earliest youth to riding and the use of fire-arms. It was not until later, when Cromwell confronted the brilliant

dash and courage of the Cavaliers with a courage of another kind, born of religious enthusiasm and disciplined by his commanding military genius, that the tide turned.

1643. At the beginning of 1643 the Royalist position in Wales was very strong. The castles of Raglan, Hereford, Cardiff, Ludlow, Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Chester, Ruthin, and Chirk were all in the King's hands.[1] But as the year advanced the position of the respective forces in Wales began to change. In April Parliament had passed an ordinance for making satisfaction to Sir Thomas Myddelton (and others) for losses sustained by
June. the King's forces.[2] On 11th June Parliament appointed Sir Thomas Myddelton, member for the county of Denbigh, to be Sergeant Major-General for the six counties of North Wales.

There is much evidence from documents of 1643 to show that as the summer went on it became increasingly difficult to raise the trained bands required from Chirk for the King's service. On 18th July a warrant is issued to the High Constable of Nantheudwy, charging him to "make search for the persons undernamed and to apprehend and attach and in sure and safe manner to bringe before us or others His Majestie's Commissioners of Array, to Chirke upon Tuesday the first daye of August, to answer to such matters as shall be objected against them on his Majesty's behalf." The order is signed "Ken. Eyton, John Edwardes, John Trevor." The defaulting persons are "Richard ap Ieuan and Robert ap John, of Krogen Wladies [Wladys]; Thos. ap Robert and John

[1] See Phillips' *Civil War in Wales and the Marches.*
[2] State Papers, Domestic.

Thomas, of Kilkychwyn; David ap Rees of Krogen Iddon; and Hugh Meredith of Glyn Fechan."[1]

Again, on the 29th there is an order to the Constables of the Peace of the Hundred of Chirk: "Complaint having been made by Morris ap Edward that persons hereunder named being partners with him to bear their several parts of arms in the trained band refuse to appear and pay their share of the contribution," the said persons are to be apprehended and brought before the Court of Chirk on 1st August.[2] Six names—not the ones mentioned in the previous order—are appended.

An order of the Commissioners issued in the next fortnight shows that the Parliamentary forces were pressing the Royalists closely on the border.

"The Commissioners of Array to the Constable of the Peace for the Hundred of Chirk: Forasmuch as we have certain intelligence that the rebels His Majesty's enemies are now in a body upon the confines of this country, and shortly intend to invade and annoy these parts, and whereas the Hundred of Bromefield, upon apprehension of the danger, have raised 124 musketeers and have put them under command to guard the passages upon the river of Dee, and by way of cessment do levy upon the said Hundred the sum of £150 for the payment of their soldiers and officers for one month, we thought fit and so agreed that 100 men be forthwith raised within the Hundred of Chirkland and Yale, and put under command for the like purposes, and that £100 be levied to pay the officers and soldiers their proportion. These are therefore in His Majesty's name straitly to

[1] Puleston MSS. [2] *Ibid.*

charge and command you forthwith to cess, levy, and gather within your Hundred, the sum of 100 marks, being the proportion that falls due upon your Hundred, and the same to pay over into the hands of William Fletcher of Llanddyn, gentleman."[1]

It seems scarcely conceivable that the following is the response to the above order. If it did indeed take three months to raise the men and money required—with the Parliamentary forces beginning to win victories in all the region round—the local Royalists must have been in very low water indeed by this time. There is certainly an apologetic and depressed tone about the letter, and if it is really a reply to the order of August, the word "hastened" has an almost pitiably ironic sound. The letter runs as follows:

"Nov. 6th 1643. *Chirk.* John Edwards to Sir Rich. Lloyd and the rest of the Commissioners of Array in Bromfield: I have hastened the soldiers you desired; the delay has been caused by the illness of Mr. John Trevor, who could not assist me; and nine townships, which belonged to him as captain of the Club men, did not appear before me according to my warrant. I have no arms with which to furnish the men."[2]

The following petition is undated, but internal evidence proves it to have been written in the autumn of 1643, at some date subsequent to 11th September, on which day Wem was garrisoned by the Parliament.[3] The discussion

[1] Puleston MSS. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] For the story of how Wem, under Col. Mytton, held out for the Parliament against a force that outnumbered its own by twelve to

of the defence of the Keiriog "at the passage lying under Lower Chirk" (where the present bridge is) gives a special local interest to this petition.

"Petition of the Commissioners of Array to John Lord Byron, Field Marshal General of all His Majesty's Forces in the Counties of Worcester, Salop, Chester, Lancashire and the six Counties of North Wales: Having seriously taken into consideration the distressed estate of these parts, having for no little space lain in the mouth of danger, and too near the enemy garrisoned at Wem, a strong receipt of rebels, daily subject to their sallies and excursions, we humbly supplicate and certify your honour, that according to the best of our knowledge, strengthened with the judgment of most expert and able old soldiers, with whom in that behalf we have conferred, that the passage over the river of Keiriog lying under Lower Chirk is so convenient and necessary, and conduceth so much for the good of these poor parts of Wales, that without utter neglect and great danger of the country it cannot be any longer left without a good and sufficient guard of soldiers."[1]

The task of the Commissioners of Array in the Chirk district in 1643 was clearly an extremely difficult one. The demands made on "these poor parts of Wales"

one, see Philips' *Civil War in Wales and the Marches*, vol. i, p. 177. In this siege the women of Wem fought so well, and contributed so greatly to the success of the resistance, that their valour has come down to us in the old rhyme:

"The women of Wem and a few musketeers
Beat the Lord Capel, and all his cavaliers."

[1] Puleston MSS.

by the Royalist leaders were greater than the neighbourhood could or would respond to, and we find the Commissioners petitioning Prince Rupert that the hundred "may pay only proportioned with the rest of the country," and pointing out that it "has paid about £100 within twelve months."[1]

Victories at Wem, Shrewsbury, and Holt in the autumn encouraged the Parliamentary army to occupy Wales. At the beginning of winter Sir Thomas Myddelton came to Wrexham. According to a newspaper of the day[2] he was received with great joy at Wrexham, the Welshmen being "extremely glad at his return amongst them," and promising to help him to regain possession of Chirk Castle, which had been in the enemy's hands for nearly a year. From this time victories for the Parliament followed each other in quick succession. Castle after castle fell into their hands.

1644. In January of the next year the Royalists were defeated at Ellesmere. In February came another call upon the Hundred of Chirk, in spite of the remonstrance of the Commissioners. The order is for the raising of a sum to pay the 400 foot soldiers of Col. Hunckes' regiment in garrison at Wrexham.[3]

From every side complaints poured into the Royalist head-quarters from officers commanding on the Welsh border. Sir John Mennes writes from Shrewsbury: "Money is a thing not spoken, neither do I perceive

[1] Puleston MSS.

[2] *Certain Informations*, No. 45, King's Pamphlets 134-6, quoted by Phillips.

[3] Puleston MSS.

your Highness's last letter prevail at all with them. More than yesterday night they first proffered to give every troop 6*d.*, and after some dispute they would have made it up to 12*d.*, if it would have been received. I must crave your Highness's pardon if I quit the place, for I have not wherewithal to subsist any longer having received but £22 now in eleven months and lived upon my own without free quarters for horse or man. The fortune I have is all in the Rebels' hands, or in such tenants' as have forgot to pay." [1]

In May John Watts writes from Chirk Castle to Sir Abraham Shipman, imploring his "helpe in accommodating of mee with some match." [2] A letter from Sir Fulke Hunckes to Prince Rupert, written in July, witnesses to the complete reversal of the relative positions of the two armies in Wales which one year had brought about. Sir Fulke informs the Prince that "Marrow is now returning to go about Chirk to seek to get his horse together again." He adds: "This country is in a very bad condition, and men are here very slow in fulfilling your Highness' commands." [3]

At the end of the year Chirk became the scene of one of the most dramatic episodes in the course of its history. Shortly before Christmas Sir Thomas Myddelton appeared before his own Castle (which was still in the hands of the Royalists) and besieged it. The two detailed accounts of this siege which we possess are both from Royalist sources. The first of these is from the Governor of the Castle.

[1] Warburton's *Prince Rupert*, vol. ii, p. 371 (note); quoted in Phillips' *Civil War*.

[2] State Papers, Domestic, 1644.

[3] *Ibid.*

"From Governor John Watts to Prince Rupert

May it please your Highness,

Christmas, 1644. This gentleman journeying towards Oxford, I most humbly beseech leave to present to your Highness by him an account of a late action of the rebels. They lately besieged me for three days; their engineers attempted to work into the castle with iron crows and pickers under great planks and tables which they had erected against the castle side for their shelter, but my stones beat them off. They acknowledged in Oswestry they had 31 slain by the castle and 43 others hurt; their prime engineer was slain by the castle-side; they are very sad for him. If your Highness please, this gentleman will fully impart all the passages during the siege to your Highness; he was in the castle with me. I shall not presume to be further tedious. I most humbly kiss your Highness' sweet hands, and will ever be

Your Highness' most humble and assuredly faithful servant,

Chirk Castle Dec. 25 1644. John Watts.

To His Highness Prince Rupert, humbly present this." [1]

The second account of the siege is taken from *Mercurius Aulicus*, a Royalist newspaper.

He [Sir Thos. Myddelton] came therefore before Chirk four days before Christmas, with his two brothers, Cols. Mytton and Powell. He would not abuse the castle with ordnance (because it was his own house) but fell on with fire-locks at a sink-hole where the Governor, Col. Watts,

[1] State Papers, Domestic, 1644.

was ready to receive him; and gave a pretty number admittance (having an inner work within that hole) but when he saw his opportunity he knocked them all down that came in, and with muskets killed of the rebels 67,[1] wounded many more, and beat off Sir Thomas, who became so enraged that he plundered his own tenants."[2] This last statement may be accepted by those who think it consistent with General Myddelton's character, or who think it likely that a landlord would "plunder" the tenants from whom his rents were to come. *Mercurius Aulicus* is as much or as little to be relied upon for its facts as any other rabid party organ of our own day. The fact of its doubling the Governor's own account of the number of deaths before the Castle affords sufficient ground for a refusal to believe in an incident so little in keeping with Myddelton's character.

The remaining strongholds of the Royalists in Cheshire and on the Welsh border were now hard pressed. Beeston Castle and Chester were both under close siege. Chester was getting short of provisions, the Parliamentary army under Brereton being stationed on the Welsh side, from which the city got its chief supplies. With the fall of Chester the Royalist hold on Wales would be lost. It was therefore decided to place the command for North Wales in the hands of Prince Maurice, and to send him at once to the relief of the besieged garrisons.[3] In an autograph account, written by a certain "Thomas Malbon, of Nantwich, Gent.," we have a record of the

[1] It is interesting to note that the death-roll has doubled in its journey to London.

[2] *Mercurius Aulicus*, King's Pamphlets, British Museum, 191-7.

[3] See Phillips' *Civil War, etc.*

movements of the Parliamentary army, consequent upon Prince Maurice's expected arrival. In this account Chirk is mentioned.

Feb. 1645. "On Tuesday and Wednesday, being the xith and xiith of ffebruary 1645, the parliament forces, having ayde from Yorkshire, Darbieshire, Staffordshire, and some more from Lancashire, beinge enformed that Prince Morrys [Maurice] was come to Shrowsbury, expectinge great forces, kept their Randevous upon Preece Heath, beinge a very stronge Army consistinge bothe of horse and foote: and the Prince's army beinge about twoe thousand did marche to Chirke Castle, and the p'liam^t^ Army marched into Wales towards the latter ende of the same week: but the Prince removing from place to place, could not be mett withall, nor overtaken, which they p'ceyvinge and fearing lest he wold wheele about some waye into Cheshire and remove the leaguer from Beeston Castle before Ayde cold come from the Army in Wales unto them: presentlie after the whole Army marched forth of Wales into Cheshire back again on Monday the 17th of ffebruary."[1]

Prince Maurice made a brief halt at Shrewsbury, and on his departure took with him all the men he could get. This left the town weaker than ever—a fact promptly taken advantage of by the Parliament's generals, who concentrated their forces on the town, and took it on 22nd February.[2]

[1] From an autograph account in forty-nine pages of folio MS. preserved in the Cowper collection, and printed for the Record Office in 1889. Title, *Memorials of the Civil War in Cheshire and the adjacent Counties, by Thos. Malbon of Nantwich, Gent.*

[2] For a full account see Phillips' *Civil War, etc.*

In March 1645 the eldest son of Sir Thomas (the General) was appointed Governor of Chirk Castle by the Parliament. The following entries (domestic and military) are of interest as giving some idea of the staffing of the Castle at this period :

	£	s.	d.	
To the Steward etc. at 14/- a week	2	16	0	1645.
Commissary and Baker at 14/-	2	16	0	
Butler and his man at 13/-	2	12	0	
Ensigne at 10/-	2	2	0	
Cookes at 10/-	2	0	0	
Brewer at 7/-	1	8	0	

In June followed the victory of Naseby, in which for the first time Cromwell's "new model" took the field—that army of which it has been said that "from the time when it was remodelled to the time when it was disbanded it never found, either in the British Isles or on the Continent, an enemy who could stand its onset. In England, Scotland, Ireland, Flanders, the Puritan warriors, often surrounded by difficulties, sometimes contending against threefold odds, not only never failed to conquer, but never failed to destroy and break in pieces whatever force was opposed to them. They at length came to regard the day of battle as a day of certain triumph, and marched against the most renowned battalions of Europe with disdainful confidence."[1]

A letter written in the following August from Chirk Castle has a curiously peaceful sound about it, considering

[1] Macaulay's *History of England.*

how near the castle was to scenes of siege and battle. When restorations to Llansilin Church were taking place in 1790 this letter was found under the floor of the gallery:

"From Sir John Watts, Royalist Governor of Chirk Castle, to Mr. Jarvis, Vicar of the parish [Llansilin].

S'r,—Whereas I desired yours and your brother's good companie to dinner on Friday next; I shall desire you will make choice of some other day to come and dine with me; what day in the beginning of next week you please. In regard the next Friday is our feast day, which I was ignorant of when I invited you. I assure you yee shall bee most welcome to mee at all times.

I remain your affectionate friende,

JOHN WATTS.

Aug. 6th 1645.

For my very good friende, Mr. Jarvis, Minister of Llansilin, this." [1]

The next month found Chirk once more in the main current of events. The King was marching north from Hereford with the idea of possibly joining Montrose in Scotland, and relieving Chester on the way. On this journey he slept one night at Chirk Castle. In the Journal of the King's movements at this time the entries for these days are as follows:

"Friday Sep. 19. This day we marched from Presteyne, and, except in the first three myle, we never saw a house or a church, over ye mountaynes—they call it

[1] The original of this letter may be seen in the vestry of Llansilin Church.

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

BED IN WHICH CHARLES I SLEPT, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO CHIRK CASTLE IN 1645

10 myle, but 20—till we came to Newtown co. Montgomery. Satterday rested. Sunday 21 Sept: Over the mountaynes, less barren than the day before, by Sir Arthur Blaney's house to Llan Vutlyn [Llanfyllin] a borough towne in Montgomeryshire.

Monday 22. Over such mountaynes to Chirke Castle, co. Salop. There the King lay. Watts is Governor. The guards to Llangothlyn, a market towne, co. Denbigh, three myle from Chirke." [1]

Another account, written at the time, has the following entry under the date of September 21st:

"The King passed through Mountgomeryshire, and lay that night at Llanfyllin. The next day, the 22nd Sept., the King marched from Llanfyllin by Brithdir, where he dined, and gave proclamation among his soldiers that they should not plunder anything in Denbyshire; and thence through Mochnant to Cevn hir Fynydd, and so along the tops of the mountaynes to Chirke Castle. The rest of the forces marched to Llansilin. The next day after, being Tuesday, the King advanced towards Chester. Sep. 24, being Wednesday, the King's forces were routed by the Parliamentary army in a place called Rowton Moor." [2]

This was the well-known occasion on which the King watched, from the Phœnix Tower on the walls of Chester, the defeat of his army.

[1] Symonds' *Continuation of the Marchings of the Royal Army, etc.* Harl. MSS., 944.

[2] From *Memoranda of the Civil War in North Wales*, written at the time by Mr. William Maurice of Llansilin. Extracted from the Wynnstay MSS.

"From Chester the King retreated to Denbigh Castle, and, having layed there two or three nights, retourned to Chirke Castle."[1] His reason for this return is given in the Journal, where the entry for Thursday the 25th is as follows: "News that Prince Maurice was coming with 1000 horse to us, and was at Chirke. About one of the clocke afternoon, the King marched through Ruthyn, where there is a large castle and fortified, to Chirke Castle. Watts knighted. Here Prince Maurice met us with his troope, and those of Prince Rupert's horse that came from Bristoll, Lucas's horse etc.

Toto 600 to 700."[2]

From here Charles moved towards Newark. During the last months of this year disaster after disaster fell upon the Royalist forces. Of the garrisons nearest to Chirk, Beeston Castle and Hawarden both fell into the hands of the Parliament, and Chester was nearly at the end of its resources. On 3rd February 1646, it yielded to the Parliament, after a prolonged siege, in which city and garrison distinguished themselves by their courage and endurance. The victorious Parliamentary leaders who, with Sir William Brereton at their head, arranged the terms of surrender, distinguished themselves no less by the marked generosity of those terms.[3]

In the month preceding the surrender we hear of Governor Watts writing from Chirke Castle "on business connected with the bringing over of forces from Ireland

[1] Mr. William Maurice's *Memoranda.*
[2] *Marchings of the Royal Army.*
[3] See Phillips' *Civil War in Wales and the Marches*, pp. 353-4.

to assist the King and to relieve Chester."[1] The final episode in which Sir John Watts disappears from the scene, presents that gentleman in anything but an heroic light. In strong contrast to his fellow Royalists who were then defending Chester up to the verge of starvation, he appears to have sent information to the Parliament that he was ready to negotiate for the voluntary surrender of Chirk Castle, which was undergoing no siege or attack whatever. The whole affair is an ignominious sequel to the spirited defence in 1644, of which Watts wrote in such exalted terms.

In January we find the Parliamentary Committee writing to Colonel Thomas Mitton as follows: "We are informed that there is some probability of obtaining Chirk Castle for the service of the Parliament. We desire you to treat with the Governor concerning it, and in case he shall be willing to deliver it up, you are empowered to promise him that this Committee will use their best endeavour with both Houses for the freedom of his person and estate; you may also promise a sum not exceeding £200, so that the place be actually delivered into the hands of the Parliament within six weeks from this date."[2] Jan. 1646.

This condition was complied with, as we have proof in the contemporary memoranda of William Maurice of Llansilin, who has the following entry under the date of February 23rd: "The Montgomeryshire forces began to fortify Llansilin Church for the straightninge and keepinge in of Chirk Castle men, where Sir John Watts was

[1] State Papers, Domestic, 1646.

[2] *Ibid.* The Committee's letter is endorsed, "Called for by a Gent."

governour; who, shortly after deserting the Castle and marchinge towards the King's army with all his garrison, were taken by the men of Montgomery Castle after a hotte bickeringe in Church Stoke Church, the first day of Marche 1646."[1]

Nine days later there is a draft order from the Committee of both kingdoms appointing Sir Thomas Middelton to be Governor of Chirk Castle.[2]

This is followed on 11th June by another draft order for payment of £200 to Sir John Watts, late Governor of Chirk Castle, in discharge of Colonel Mytton's engagements upon surrender of the Castle.[3] With this the unpleasant transaction ends.

In October Sir Robert Byron, one of the Royalist officers, writes to Archbishop Williams about the assembling of troops at Chirk. It would appear from the letter that Byron was unaware that the Archbishop —who up to this point had been an unwavering supporter of the King's cause—had, at the time of writing, practically gone over to the Parliament. It was largely by his information and advice that Colonel Mytton had been enabled to take the town and castle of Conway for the Parliament. This is the more curious, as the Archbishop had been the life and soul of the defence, and had repaired the castle and the walls of the town at his own private expense.[4] His information to Colonel Mytton, and the fall of Conway, had taken place in

[1] *Memoranda of the Civil War in North Wales*, written at the time by Mr. William Maurice of Llansilin, printed from the Wynnstay MSS.

[2] Historical MSS. Commission.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] See Phillips' *Civil War*, pp. 375-378.

August, but it is evident that Byron writes in ignorance of the fact.

Letter from Sir R. Byron to Archbishop Williams, 24th October 1646:

"May it please your Grace, I have sent your Grace here inclosed a coppy of a letter from S'r John Watts which came just now to me from Sir Will. Neale. Your Grace may please to take notice that this night S'r Will. Vaughan will be at Chirke, and therefore (if your Grace should think it fitt) I conceive it necessary that the horse and foote of Caernavonshire and Anglysy should with all convenient speede advance as far as this place, and the rather because that the forces of these countryes will not draw into a body untill then."[1]

Anglesey and Carnarvon being by this time entirely in the hands of the Parliament, the Royalist troops had been obliged to evacuate that part of Wales.

The first part of the Civil War was now practically at an end. In May the King gave himself up to the Scots at Newark. A few fortresses still held out—amongst them Harlech Castle, which did not surrender till 1647—but the main struggle was over.

Some Castle accounts of 1646 do not begin till the month of May, when the Castle was once more in the hands of Sir Thomas and the Parliament. The entries relate chiefly to garrison and other military expenses.

[1] British Museum MSS., Lansdowne Collection.

		£	s.	d.
1646. May.	" Chap. [Chaplain?]	1	0	0
	Leutenant		14	0
	Chirugien		14	0
	Ensigne		10	6
	2 Sergeants		10	6
	3 Corporals		9	0
	1 gen. [gentleman?]		3	0
	1 drummer		3	0
	30 soldiers	2	10	0
	Governor	7	0	0
June 4.	Delivered Capt. Dd. Moris and Lieut. to pay the soldiers 2 months' pay	30	16	0
June 13.	Pd and given to the ringers at St. martins as you passed by		2	6
	Pd Capt. Moris for a gray mare for the use of the garrison	5	10	0
Aug. 1.	Pd to Tho. Edds of Oswestrie for cloth John Taylor bought for ye soldiers Sep. 2, 1644	16	14	0
	Pd at Wrexham to Mr. Hanmers man that bought the setting dog		5	0
Aug. 10.	Pd. to Mr. Edds per cosen Myddelton for teaching Peg (Margaret Kyffin) to write		8	0
Oct. 6.	Pd. to Rich Hauxshaw for Casting and laying 3 tun and 12^{c} of lead 65^{s} and for casting 4 sheets more 10^{s} and soudring and other work he did about the Castle in all	4	10	0
Nov. 5.	Pd to Robt. ap John mazon for 24 daies and his man 24 dai. in leading, singling and			

	£	s.	d.	
other worke at the Constables and Blacke-towers	1	16	0"	

Of Chirk in its relation to national affairs in the years 1647-8 the public records give us no accurate information—although rumour touches on St. Thomas's movements. The Castle accounts supply one item of general interest in an entry of June 1647, of £25 10*s.* 7*d.* paid "to Richard Bradshaw, receiver of North Wales, the King's majestie's rent for the half year" [for certain lands, specified, in Denbighshire and Merionethshire]. 1647.

Two or three entries, from the accounts of the next two years, afford momentary glimpses of Chirk's affairs. The entry under the date 24th March 1649 is highly significant of the growing power of the soldiery.

	£	s.	d.	
"Pd. for provision for the garrison and the house from July 21, 1646, till Christmas 1647, besides what of your owne beefe, mutton and corne was spent	225	0	0	1648. June 10.
Pd. Capt. D. D. Moris what he layd out viz.—to the 2 prisoners of langdale 25*s.* for 6 horses taken from the Cavelleres at Llangollen £3 15*s.* 6*d.* Charges at Wrexham at the generall meeting Friday last was 3 weeks 6*s.* 10*d.*, and John Wm. ap Roger in fortnight's pay 3*s.*	6	10	4	Sept. 16.
Pd. to 8 of Capt. Thelwalls' Troopers towards giving his troop these 5 last months £5. 8*s.* 11*d.*, and 20*s.* more, both beinge forced,				1649. March 24.

		£	s.	d.
	they refusing to leave my [Watkin Kyffin's] house till they were pd.	8	18	11
April 30.	Pd. to John ap Edd smith for shoing oxen		12	0"

During these years the country was inwardly rebelling more and more against the severe and unconstitutional rule of the army, which, after doing its great work of freeing England from Charles' attacks on her liberties, was now fast becoming itself a tyranny. During this period Sir Thomas Myddelton transferred his allegiance from the Parliamentary to the Royalist cause. Whether he actively assisted the Royalist rising in Wales in 1648 there is no evidence to show, but it is said [1] that he was among the members of Parliament who were forcibly expelled by the army in that year at the time of Pride's Purge. That his changed allegiance was either not yet an accomplished fact, or not yet known to the Parliamentary authorities in 1649, is proved by an order of the Council to the Lord general in March of that year. "Montgomery and Hawarden Castles in Flintshire may prove dangerous to the Commonwealth if surprised by the enemy, in causing a diversion of our forces for reducement, besides the expense of blood and treasure. We desire you to take care that they may be kept from surprise. Chirk Castle, the dwelling-house of Sir Thos. Middleton, is also in danger; we therefore desire you to send for him, and order that it be also kept safe from surprise." [2]

1651. Two years later his attitude was fully known to the

[1] *Memoir of Chirk Castle*, by Richard Myddelton.
[2] State Papers, Domestic.

Commonwealth Government. On 4th May 1651 the Council of State made the following order: "Sir Thos. Middleton[1] to enter into a bond in £10,000, with two sureties in £5,000 each, to appear when summoned, act nothing prejudicial to the present Government, and not suffer any use to be made of his house, called Chirk Castle, to the disservice of the Commonwealth."[2] On 16th May, these terms having been accepted, the garrison which the Government had put into Chirk Castle was withdrawn. On 30th May the following order is issued from the Council of State to Colonel Duckenfield: "Complaint has been made of contempts and abuses committed by officers and others, against our orders to you for withdrawing the guards put into Chirque Castle, and relating to the person of Sir Thos. Middleton, whom,—after his examination, taking the engagement and giving security —we thought fit to dismiss and leave his house free." Colonel Duckenfield is ordered to examine into these complaints and find out the truth, and send the Council a certificate. The order continues: "If you find the complaint against Corporal Edward Lloyd verified, secure him in Denbigh Castle for such audaceous contempts. Return us the answer of the three Commissioners complained of, who instructed the Capt. of the Guard to disobey our order."[3]

A reference to this withdrawal of the garrison occurs in the accounts as follows:

"Pd. to the souldiers that watched in the Castle when the souldiers of the newe milicia tooke the charge thereof £1 10*s*." 1651.

[1] The spelling of the name was variable at this period.
[2] State Papers, Domestic, 1651. [3] *Ibid.*

Among the most interesting entries of the year are those relating to the assessment for the Trained Bands at the battle of Worcester; to the curious engagement of colliers to watch at the Castle; and the list of books and pamphlets on the controversies of the day, bought by Sir Thomas Myddelton.

		£	s.	d.
1651. Aug. 23.	"Pd. Miles the smith for eleaven daies he was scowreinge and fixinge armes at 20*d.* pr diem		18	4
Aug. 28.	Pd. the Souldiers a fortnight's pay more	5	12	0
	Pd. 4 colliers for watchinge 2 nights apeece		4	0
Sept. 13.	Pd. Josias and Roger ap Rondle for slatinge the Dogg Kennell: viz. 7000 goinge to slate it at 6*d.* per 1000	2	2	0
	Pd. Rich Rowland his wife for mosse to slate the dog kennell		2	4
	Pd. Ben Cupper for 6 books viz: Hamonds desertac̃ons 3*s.*, Certamen Religiosum 4*s.*, Taylors sermons in folio 8*s.*, Hobb's Rudiments 2*s.* [Sir Kenelm] Digbye letters 1*s.*, and for a white box to carry them in all		18	8
	Paid John Heylin to pay for carryinge of the red deare from Ellesmere to Chirke Castle		2	0
Sept. 22.	Paid yo^{r} selfe at yo^{r} goinge to Wrexham to meete General Harrisone	1	0	0
Sept. 29.	Paid Harry Thomas Constable of Bronygarth a lewne for dolhonks for repayreinge bridges and to the milicia 4*d.*, and towards mainteyninge ye Scots prisoners 1*d.*			5

	£	s.	d.
Pd. the assessment to the Army for the 3 monethes ended Dec. 1651	1	10	0
Pd. an assessment to the use of the Trayned band Souldiers at Worcester fight	1	2	0"

It was now two years since the execution of Charles I and the establishment of the Commonwealth. By this time Sir Thomas Myddelton's change of views had reached the ears of the future Charles II, and produced the following letter from him: "Stoke, 17 Aug. 1651. Sir Thomas Myddelton, my lord of Derby hath acquainted me wth your affecçons to s've me, and the bearer will let you know my condition, and the present opportunitie to attempt the recov'y of my right and my subjects' lib'ties. I desire and require you upon this occasion to declare and stirr up for me wth all the power and interest you have, w^ch^ I am satisfied is very greate, assisting the Earle of Derby in the execucion of his commission, w^ch^ he is now about, and in any other way you can advantage affaires. This doing you shall be sure of whatsoever he gives you hopes of from me, or shall p^r^mise you in my name. I desire you to send me speedy intelligence of the condiçon of North Wales, wth what els you know that may concern my service."[1]

(*From the Castle Accounts*)

	£	s.	d.	
"Pd. for one dozen skynns of parchment had at Oswestry to ingross the subscripc̄ons to the petic̄on of North Wales at 12*d.* a skynn		13	0	1652. Aug. 3.

[1] State Papers, Domestic, 1651.

		£	s.	d.
	Pd. for paꝑ [paper] had by me at Oswestrie for to make coppies of the petic̄on and letters		1	6
	Pd. Ben Cupper for his Bill of 45*s.* 10*d.* books viz. Penkinson's [Parkinson's] Herball 38*s.*, Bishop lesteyer's reply to Milton 3*s.*, ladyes dispensatory 18*s.*, Culpeppers Almanacke 6*d.*, Churches Plea for tiethes 4*d.*, Act of Oblivion 8*d.*, Doctor Taylor's Catechisme 3*d.*, and for carredge of the last 2 bookes 3*d.*	2	5	10
1653.	Pd. Ffabian, Mr. Grosvenor his man, for a slip and coller that he bought for the grey-hound to goe to Wallisey [1]		1	4
Jan. 13.	Pd. Ben Cupper for the lord Protector's declaration concerninge the forme of goūment, and postage		1	1
Jan. 25.	Pd. the Coopers for hewinge wood for cow-pery worke of the ould wood in Parke y waen this week		11	0
Feb. 11.	Pd. for stockinge broome and gorse at the higher ꝑke		7	6
1654. March 27.	Pd. Edward ap John ap David, Church-warden of Chirke, a mize for the reparation of Chirke Church for all the lands you have in Chirke parish for the y^{re} 1653		4	5
May 12.	Pd. Mr. Kyffin what he paid Captaine Basnet to give Mr. Myddelton of Llansilin his boy that bought the birch can [cane]		1	0

[1] This, as Mr. W. M. Myddelton points out, is Wallasey, in Cheshire, where races had been run for generations past and continued to be run down to 1750. They took place on a level course behind the Leasowe Embankment.

	£	s.	d.	
Pd. Morris what he paid for drink at Richard Oliver when wee killed the otter		1	0	June 23.
Pd. at Bickley, to the butler 5*s.*, Mr. Hill the Cupboard keeper 30*d.*, to the Cooke 5*s.*, to the under cooke 30*s.*, to the maide of the kitchen 2*s.*, to the Chamblaine 5*s.*, to Jo[n] Lardinge the under Chamblaine 3*s.*, to the groome of the stable 5*s.*, to the under groome 2*s.*, to the usher of the hall 30*d.*, to the Porter 3*s.*, to the poore there 6*d.*	2	0	6	July 14.
Pd. yo[r]selfe at the drawinge roome to play at Cards with m[ris] Herbert and M[ris] Myddelton	1	0	0	Nov. 10.
Pd. for a tanned horse skynne for a curryckle for Roger Pinner to passe over the meadowes when the flood cometh over, to save the cattle		8	0	Nov. 21.
Pd. for a pound of tobacco to those that keepe watch at the Castle		1	4	March 17.
Pd. for scaffoldinge the Towre to repaire the breach in that tyme		9	0	1655. Ap. 4.
Pd. for takeinge up 16 loades of limestones at 3*d.* loade and for breakeinge the said stones at 2*d.* p. loade: cometh to		6	8	"Limestones to repaire the Tower."
Pd. labourers viz. — mazons servers and morter makers in mending the breach of the Towre this week	1	5	4	Ap. 7.
Pd. mazons and servers for mending the breach in the Towre	4	2	4	Ap. 17.
Pd. Joseph ap Dd and William ap Edd. Churchwardens of Chirke what you were				June 19.

		£	s.	d.
	pleased to give distressed Ptestants [Protestants] in the dukedome of Savoy [1]	5	0	0
July 28.	Pd. Stephen Samuell the potter of Pennyclawd for 12 potts to take froggs		1	0
Aug. 14.	Pd. the boy that brought the yellow Conney [rabbit?] to the garden			6
	Pd. Thos. Jones for 42 partridges at 4*d.* a peece 14*s.*, and for 57 cockes at 3*d.* a peece and 7 snipes at 1*d.* a peece	1	8	10
Nov. 21.	Pd. John ap Edward for hunting severall daies with you: he liveth near Llyn Mawr in the Glyn	1	1	0
Jan. 30.	Pd. for the carredge of a booke called a choice garden of all sorts of flowers written by John Parkinson [2] from London		1	0
1656. July 10.	Pd. Roger ap Edward als y coch of Pennyclawdd by allowing it in his rent for beere had of him at several tymes viz.—when Major Generall Berry went by the garden 8*s.*, when Judge Bradshawe went by 4*s.*		12	0
Aug. 18.	Paid to ousler at Ruthin at our goinge to the elecc̄on for ten horses hay 10*d.*, and for tape to tye to the great bay stoned horse his tayle 4*d.*		1	2
Feb. 2.	Paid for 12 paior of little Iron cupples for the begles		3	0
1657. Aug. 31.	Pd. to Edward ap Howell, constable of			

[1] The Piedmontese, on whom Milton wrote his great sonnet: *Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered Saints.*

[2] One of the most famous of old gardening books.

The Honourable Succesfull And truly Valiant
Major Generall Lambert &c. of the Forces Comaunded
By His Excellencie Oliver Cromwell &c. /
Printed by Alex. Gillman at the Sunn in hand in Cannonstreet

MAJOR-GENERAL LAMBERT

From a print in the British Museum

	£	s.	d.	
Crogen Waldys a mize towards the makinge of a bridge over Keiriog under Chirke Towne and the repacon of the bridge by Chirke Castle and 4 other bridges		6	0	
Pd. James Evans the groome to give John ffoster the ffarrior for bleedinge the newe Arabian in the feete		2	6	1658. March 26.
Pd. for 3 primmers for the Children			6	May 13.
Pd. Morris the groome by yo^{r} appointment 45*s.* to beare his charges to London with the Arabian horse that the lo: Protector had	2	5	0	May 11.
Pd. a souldier of the name of Myddelton in the bowlinge alley		5	0	Aug. 19.
Pd what you appointed to give Ellesmere musicke for playing at the Castle		2	0	Oct. 6.
Paid to an ould man a philosopher that brought a letter from my lady Herbert		5	0"	Nov. 9.

In September 1658 came the death of Cromwell, and on the removal of that great personality there followed risings of the Cavaliers in nearly every county. The Cheshire gentlemen, led by Sir George Booth, started the movement in the summer of 1659. From the outset it spread with great rapidity. Extracts from a private French correspondence of the time tell how "Major-General Lambert is also sent with a large body of horse and foot to march through the counties to prevent further commotion. They are two thousand or three thousand strong. They hold Chick [Chirk] Castle, which was delivered them by Sir Thomas Middleton, but it has no water. The Cheshire Rising, 1659.

Lord Lambert has gone to encounter them with a good body of horse and foot, and a train of artillery."[1]

On 21st August General Lambert writes to the Parliament from Chester. After describing the taking of Chester, he continues: "Sir Thos. Middleton yesterday passed over the Ferry at Ronckhorne [Runcorn] and came to this town, and as I am informed, is gone to Chirk Castle. I have sent hither a summons, and have accompanied it with three Troops of horse, and four companies of foot, under the command of the Col. Biscoe, and intend (if it please God to give a blessing to your forces gone into Lancashire) to go thither myself tomorrow."[2] We know from the next letter from headquarters, that on reaching Chirk, and ascertaining the strength of the enemy, Lambert wrote to the Parliament on the 23rd. This letter does not seem to have been preserved, but its contents can be gathered from the following reply: "President Harrington to Lord Lambert, Whitehall, Aug. 26. Immediately on receipt of yours of the 23rd, giving an account of Chirke Castle and the obstinacy of the enemy there, Council gave order for your provision of the things you desired for reducing the Castle to obedience. They presume that on the surrender of the enemy you will grant no terms but the mercy of Parliament."[3]

From the day's proceedings for 26th August in the Council of State we gather what artillery Lambert had asked for in his letter of the 23rd. The Admiralty Com-

[1] State Papers, Domestic: Private French Correspondence.

[2] British Museum Library. Letter of Lord Lambert to the Parliament from Chester, Aug. 21. Read in Parl. Aug. 23rd.

[3] State Papers, Domestic.

missioners are instructed to order the ordnance officers "to give to whom Lieutenant-General Fleetwood shall name a mortar piece with shells, to be sent to Major-General Lambert for the reducement of Chirke Castle, Wales, and the Committee of Safety to order an engineer, carriages etc. to convey it to him."[1]

The exact spot from which Lambert bombarded the Castle is an interesting matter of conjecture. Tradition places it at a spot locally called "Gibraltar," above the village of Bron-y-garth, and close by Offa's Dyke, but it is doubtful whether the artillery of the period could have been effective at this distance.

On the 24th the Castle surrendered, and Lambert wrote from there to the Speaker of the House of Commons on the same day, informing him of the surrender, and discussing the political position in the district. He writes as follows: "Sir, I now give you the account of the Surrender of Chirke Castle, the last Remains of this Rebellion, which was this day delivered to us upon the terms enclosed. There is now no visible Enemie appearing in these parts, and yet I humbly conceive there rests much to be done for the settling and securing thereof from future Trouble: the spirit which led to this undertaking being rather discouraged and disappointed at present, than acquiescing the Providence of God appearing against them; and though I esteem it altogether unnecessary for any to advise you therein, yet I judge it my duty to informe you, that divers great Cities and Towns in these parts are disaffected to the Parliament, and some of them have been the chief Abettors in this late Insurrection, and yet still remain as they were,

[1] Day's Proceedings in Council of State. State Papers, Domestic.

under the same Governors and opportunities of raising new Troubles; and divers persons who though secretly yet actively have helped on this War still continue with Arms in their Hands, and begin to smooth their faces and tongues as if they intended nothing but a compliance with your service. Besides a number of others who as Neuters would have been ready to appear against you, if the Enemy (by obtaining the least success) had given them hopes of prevailing. The knowledge whereof I thought fit to lay before you, and submit to your prudence to direct therein for the peace of these Nations, as God shall direct you. I think it likewise my duty to acquaint you with the great cheerfulness which has been exprest by your forces, as well as Militia as Army; for the suppressing the Enemy, which was very evident even when danger threatened most; humbly desiring each due encouragement be given them, as you shall see fit. The Militia hath been without pay for these three years last past, except what has been lately advanced to them upon accompt, and now most of them ready to return to their own country, without pay for the present service, or anything in view for their future encouragement. I have already taken the boldness to assure them that it will be your care to make due provision for them.

There was about 150 men in this place [Chirke Castle], great store of provisions both for man and horse for many months, one little piece of Brass Ordance[1] and a competent quantity of Ammunition. The goods and provisions I have already ordered to be converted to the soldiers' use, and at the desire of divers well-affected in

[1] This is still shown at Chirk Castle.

PORTRAIT OF LIEUTENANT-GENERAL LAMBERT

From a print in the British Museum

this Country (it being also the opinion of several of the chief officers of the Army) offer that this Castle may be demolished, that it may no longer be an occasion of trouble and inconvenience to this Country as it often hath been. . . . I remain, Sir, your most faithful humble servant, J. Lambert. Chirk Castle. Aug. 24, 1659."[1]

According to the terms enclosed in this letter, the Castle, with all "Arms, Ammunition, Horse, Store of Provisions, and what else there is in the Castle" was delivered into the hands of Lambert at ten o'clock on the morning of the 24th. Thomas Myddelton, son of Sir Thomas and Governor of the Castle, together with his officers, delivered themselves up and were then granted liberty for two months "to make their application to Parliament for their money," and to obtain leave, if they could, to remain in the country. Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Broughton was excepted from this liberty.[2]

Lambert's letter, with the accompanying terms, was laid before the House by the Speaker on 27th August, whereupon Lambert was instructed "to see that Chirke Castle be demolished and made untenable."

The House also approved the terms of surrender.[3] It is said that one side of the Castle was demolished, and the trees cut and sold.[4]

The Castle accounts of "Disbursements in the Cheshire Expedition, 1659," contain many interesting entries, too numerous to quote in full. They include sums of money for the following: "horsemeate and man's meate"; "a brestplate bitt and collers for yo[r] own horse" (Sir

"horsemeate and man's meate."

[1] Mercurius Politicus, No. 584, British Museum.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] State Papers, Domestic, 1659.
[4] *Royal Tribes in Wales*, by Philip Yorke, 1798.

"ribon for garters and cuffestrings."

Thomas's); "a paior of spaynishe leather shoes," "ribon to the shoes and ribon for garters and cuffestrings," also for Sir Thomas; "at Tarperley to the officers of the house and makeinge cleane boots"; disbursements to messengers; "for an Ensigne staffe and girdle for Mr. Thomas Grosvenor"; "to Sir George Boothe's man for a blanke Commission"; "bread and cheese for the Souldiers"; "to Coll. Broughton what he laid out for intelligence"; "to the Souldiers that kept guard at Hatton"; "for a musket for a Souldier," and to Randle and Richard Bennett of Chester, shoemakers, "for 36 paiors of shoes all Delivered to Capt. Baker for the Souldiers."

How accurately Lambert had gauged the deep and widespread disaffection towards the Government—which, indeed, was now practically a military despotism—was soon to become apparent. The year 1659 was the scene of a last struggle between the restored Long Parliament and the Army. General Monk's declaration, in the following January, in favour of a free Parliament, to be newly elected, brought the rule of the Army to an end. On 25th May 1660 Charles II landed at Dover.

In the same month there is a declaration by Sir Thomas Myddelton, of his acceptance of the King's offer of pardon made at Breda on the previous 14th of April. This was a formality, required by the fact of Sir Thomas's past eminence on the Parliamentary side, but Charles had known for some time past of Myddelton's change of front.

There is now in the gallery of Chirk Castle a cabinet, richly ornamented with handwrought silver, and containing panel paintings, said to be by Rubens, which was presented by Charles II to Thomas Myddelton, son of the

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

CABINET WITH EMBOSSED SILVER WORK, PRESENTED BY CHARLES II TO THE SON OF GENERAL SIR THOMAS MYDDELTON

(THE DOORS ARE OPEN TO SHOW PAINTED PANELS ATTRIBUTED TO RUBENS)

General, who was Governor of the Castle at the time of Lambert's siege.

The Castle accounts of 1660 contain several entries relating to the Restoration, one to the Cheshire rising, and another to the disbanding of the Army:

"Pd. Richard Rowland for goinge with a letter to Coll. mostyn to acquaint him and the rest of the gentry in fflintshire that Coll. lambert was in Armes and proclaymed Trator whereby they might put themselves in a defensive posture 2*s.*, and goinge also to Coll. Ravenscroft 2*s.* — 1660. April 26.

Pd. to the ringers in token of our joye for the Parliament Resolves to send for the King 5*s.* — May 1.

Pd. to Moris Thomas the coachman when he went to Hawarden, Chester and Liverpool April last 1660 to enquire and look after yo^{r} gray horse and other horses lost in the Cheshire business 15*s.* — June 4.

For repayreing the mudwall at the Castle and its provisions and materials for use of the Garrison £255 9*s.* — July 2.

Pd. to . . . churchwardens of llanarmon a mize towards the reperacon of llanarmon Dyffryn Keiriog church for the year 1660 6*s.* — Aug. 20.

Pd. to John Batha his widd whose husband was bitt with the greate Irish Doge and fell madd thereupon 2*s.* 6*d.* — Sep. 14.

Pd. William ffireborne by alloweinge it in his rent for 3 hey netts w^{ch} were taken away from the Castle by lambert's men 15*s.* — Oct. 23.

Pd. Ed. Vaughan Esquire high sheriffe of the County of Denbigh pole money for you towards disbanding the Army by sea and land £20 — Oct. 31.

1660. March 12. Pd. Mr. Michael Hughes what he paid for the 3 licenses had from the bishop for liberty to eate flesh to yo^{r} owne and Mrs. Katherine Trevor's familie 14*s.*

March 23. Pd. Thomas Hughes the quaker of Chirke for mending the coach 6*d.*"

With the Restoration Chirk ceases to be closely connected with recorded national history.

We have now traced for five hundred years the story of its varying fortunes in so far as any records of them have been preserved. But when this has been done it still remains true of the Ceiriog valley, as of all other places where men and women have lived and died, that the most important deeds are left unrecorded. The heroism of daily life, forgotten or never known, dangers faced and hardships borne, as a matter of course, by the miner or the labourer, with none of the excitement of battle or the glory of fame; mechanical and scientific powers that have never had a chance of development; unrecorded gifts of poetry and art; work for the common good which left no visible trace, and was never dignified by high-sounding names; these things are our best heritage from the past, and about these history must perforce be silent.

"Which was the greatest innovator, which was the more important personage in man's history, he who first led armies over the Alps, and gained the victories of Cannæ and Thrasymene; or the nameless boor who first hammered out for himself an iron spade? When the oak is felled, the whole forest echoes with it; but an hundred acorns are planted silently by some unnoticed breeze.

Battles and war-tumults, which for the time din every ear, and with joy or terror intoxicate every heart, pass away like tavern brawls; and except some few Marathons and Morgartens, are remembered by accident not by desert. Laws themselves, political constitutions, are not our Life, but only the House wherein our Life is led; nay, they are but the bare walls of the house, all whose essential furniture, the inventions and traditions, and daily habits that regulate and support our existence, are the work not of Dracos and Hampdens, but of Phoenician mariners, of Italian masons and Saxon metallurgists, of philosophers, alchymists, prophets, and all the long-forgotten train of artists and artisans; who from the first have been jointly teaching us to think and how to act, how to rule over spiritual and over physical Nature. Well may we say that of our History the more important part is lost without recovery; and—as thanksgivings were wont to be offered 'for unrecognized mercies'—look with reverence into the dark untenanted places of the Past, where, in formless oblivion, our chief benefactors, with all their sedulous endeavours, but not with the fruit of these, lie entombed."[1]

[1] Carlyle.

OFFA'S DYKE

[This chapter is intended for those general readers who may be interested in the Dyke and may wish to know something of its originator and the oldest accounts of its construction. Such information is at present only attainable by means of scattered articles in the publications of learned societies, and an occasional page in larger histories. It is for these general readers that some account of Offa's life and character is given. The object aimed at is to show the Dyke as a monument of human interest, and no attempt is made to do more than touch upon the archaeological problems connected with it, while giving the main conclusions arrived at by modern archaeologists.]

THERE are few historical monuments now existing in the United Kingdom which, for combined extent and antiquity, can rank with the great earthwork called Offa's Dyke. Much of it has been levelled for agricultural purposes, and in various places along its course nearly all traces of it have disappeared. But for long stretches of its length it is in extraordinarily good preservation, and when looked at from neighbouring hills is a striking object in the landscape. That the Dyke itself should have escaped levelling in so many places is less surprising than that the ditch or fosse should still be so unmistakable after the accumulation of the soil and decayed vegetable matter of the intervening centuries. That the fosse must have been originally of great depth

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

OFFA'S DYKE ABOVE BRON-Y-GARTH

is proved by its survival as an easily recognizable—and in many places deep—ditch to this day.

From time to time the theory has been advanced that the Dyke was not built by Offa of Mercia, but was of much earlier construction. The result of archaeological research has now definitely disproved this theory. The mistake has arisen through the presence of Roman remains at certain spots in the Dyke. One discovery of such remains *under the line of the Dyke*, and below the ground level on which it was raised, is sufficient to prove that its origin is post-Roman. Such a discovery is that of the position of the hypocaust alluded to in the following summing-up of the facts on this point: "It is true that when Offa's Dyke passes a Roman station (as at Caergwrle) or actually traverses a Roman settlement (as at the Ffrith) it has been found to contain Roman coins, fibulae, inscribed altars, brooches, pins, rings of gold, silver and copper, part of an inscribed lamp, etc., *or even to cover a hypocaust*,[1] but this only shows that the Dyke *has been constructed since the Romans left the country*. There was evidently a Roman settlement at the Ffrith, and when Offa's Dyke was carried through it, the various objects found during the present century were either covered by the Dyke, or thrown up with the earth which was used to make it."[2] The same writer has pointed out the very great inherent improbability of so extensive and impressive a work having had no name attached to it if it were built before Offa's time. The unanimity of Welsh and English writers, and of Welsh and English

[1] Italics mine.

[2] A. N. Palmer, *Offa's and Wat's Dykes*. *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xii, pp. 70, 71 and note.

place-names, in the neighbourhood of the Dyke, as connecting it with Offa, is also dwelt on.

Turning to the historical evidence, contained in early chronicles, we find one item standing out pre-eminently in importance.

The building of the Dyke.

The earliest mention of the Dyke occurs in the *Life of Alfred the Great* by Asser, who was the King's contemporary and friend. As Asser lived within a century of the date assigned to the building of the Dyke his testimony is of special value. William of Malmesbury tells us that "from St. David's he [Alfred] procured a person named Asser, a man of skill in literature, whom he made bishop of Sherborne."[1] Asser's allusion to the Dyke is as follows: "There was in Mercia in recent times, a certain valiant king, who was feared by all the kings and neighbouring states around. His name was Offa, and it was he who had the great rampart made from sea to sea between Britain and Mercia."[2]

There are several twelfth-century allusions to the

[1] William of Malmesbury's *Chronicle*, Giles' translation, p. 84.

[2] Asser's *Life of Alfred*, Giles' translation. Much doubt has been thrown on the authenticity and value of Asser's *Life of Alfred*. The latest research and criticism has, however, re-established this work as one of great value. Mr. W. H. Stevenson, in his critical edition and commentary, published in 1904, has indicated those portions of the text which he has satisfied himself to be later interpolations. He also indicated those portions to which the greatest weight must be attached, and has distinguished them from others, the sources of which—while worthy of attention—he thinks less reliable. It is in this last category—that of the portions judged to have enough historical weight to be incorporated in the text, while remaining inferior to other portions in evidential value—that the phrase about the building of the Dyke occurs. See paragraph 14 (page 12) of Mr. Stevenson's edition of *Asser's Life*, "De Rebus Gestis Aelfredi."

Dyke. The first of these is in the *Life of St. Oswald*[1] and is as follows: [translation] "This place [Maserfeld] is distant from the Dyke of King Offa, which divides England and North Wales, scarcely half a mile, from Shrewsbury quite seven miles, and from Wenlock Abbey, towards the south, about sixteen miles. The aforesaid Dyke King Offa formerly constructed, entrenched within the defence of which he abode the more securely from his Welsh enemies. For, in his time, continual strife existed between him and the Welsh so that he could by no means get the upper hand of their assaults or ambushes, except with this protection. From sea to sea, therefore, it hemmed in almost all his land towards Wales, and he fixed that Dyke to be the boundary of the land of either."

Simeon of Durham has a brief allusion to the Dyke: "Beorhtric king of the West Saxons, took to himself Eadburgh, a daughter of a king of the Mercians, Offa by name, who ordered to be made between Britain and Mercia the great dyke, that is from sea to sea."[2]

The Dyke in *Brut y Tywysogion* or *Chronicle of the Princes.*

An important mention of the Dyke occurs in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, or *Chronicle of the Princes*, from which the greater part of our knowledge of early Welsh history is derived. All later historians have used its facts, to which in some cases they have added further details, possibly derived from English chronicles. Several manuscripts

[1] Quoted by Mr. A. N. Palmer in his article on *Offa's and Wat's Dykes* in *Y Cymmrodor*, 1897. Mr. Palmer—after saying that the *Life* was written in 1162 and printed in the works of Simeon of Durham—gives a note by Mr. E. Phillimore to the effect that the *Life* has been attributed to Reginald of Durham.

[2] Quoted by Mr. Palmer in the article in *Y Cymmrodor.*

of it are in existence, and these vary considerably in reliability.

First Text. "Seven hundred and eighty was the year of Christ when King Offa spoiled the Britons in summer time."

Second Text. "Three years after that the Britons were destroyed with Offa."

Third Text. "In the summer the Welsh devastated the territory of Offa, and then Offa caused a dike to be made, as a boundary between him and Wales, to enable him the more easily to withstand the attack of his enemies, and that is called Offa's dike from that time to this day."[1] A fourth Text runs the same as the third, but adds: "And it extends from one sea to another, from the south near Bristol, to the north above Flint, between the monastery of Basingwerk and Coleshill."

Perhaps nothing brings home to us more clearly the great age of the Dyke than the remark of the chronicler "and that is called Offa's dike from that time to this day." Writing in the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, he evidently regards the great earthwork as a venerable antiquity.

Giraldus Cambrensis.

Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Description of Wales*, tells us that "King Offa, by a long and extensive Dyke, separated the British from the English."[2]

[1] This third Text is from MS. "D," usually called *Brut y Saeson*. It is accepted by the latest research as containing much valuable matter. The entries in certain MSS. of *Brut y Tywysogion*, which recorded the breaking down of Offa's Dyke and the rebuilding of it by Offa "nearer him" (quoted by H. L. J. in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*) are now rejected by experts as spurious.

[2] *A Description of Wales*, p. 515, Forester's translation, edited by Thomas Wright. Giraldus was born about 1146.

Matthew Paris's *Life of Offa the Second* is worthless from an historical point of view, and his account of the building of the Dyke is pure legend.

Humphrey Lloyd, writing in the sixteenth century, incorporated the *Chronicle of the Princes* in his *Historie of Cambria*,[1] frequently doing little more than amplifying the sentences of the older work. This he does with the account of the building of the Dyke, and then adds: "And this is to be seen in many places as yet, and is called Clawddh Offa, which is Offa's ditch, at this daie."

Speed,[2] writing in the sixteenth century, merely repeats the statements of his predecessors as follows: "Offa caused a great ditch to be drawn betwixt his and the Britaine's borders, which work began at Basingwarke in Flintshire and North Wales, not far from the mouth of the Dee, and ranne along the mountains into the south, and ended near Bristowe at the fall of Wye; the tract whereof in many places is yet seene, and it is called to this day Clawdh Offa or Offa's Dyke."

At first sight it seems almost incredible that a king of Mercia should carry through so huge an undertaking as this great Dyke. But when we come to study the records

[1] Edited, with considerable additions, by Dr. Powel, and known as Powel's *Historie of Cambria.*

[2] Speed's *Historie of Great Britaine* is a mine of quaint and delightful things. He is not troubled by any undue modesty as to the scope and value of his work, and sums it up in the following verse:

> "In this Booke (Bibliothec or Booke of Bookes,
> Time's Librarie, Place's Geographie)
> All that is shewne for which the curious looke,
> Touching this Lande, for Place or Historie."

of his reign we realize that we have to deal with a king to whom Charlemagne wrote in terms as of one equal to another. The ruler whom Charles the Great addressed as his "esteemed and dearest brother Offa" must have had vast resources at his back, and have been regarded by that all-powerful king as a force to be taken into account in European politics. Offa's assumption of equality in the negotiations between them regarding their children's marriage is sufficient proof of his power.

A brief review of his career is sufficient to recall the facts. In the second half of the eighth century England was split into three kingdoms of nearly equal power. These were Northumbria in the north, Wessex in the south, and Mercia in central England. It is with this Mercian kingdom that we are concerned in its relation to the construction of the Dyke.

In 758 Offa ascended the throne of Mercia. In the course of his reign he conquered those portions of the Mercian kingdom which had been wrested from it in the preceding reigns by Wessex.

The accounts that have come down to us exhibit his character as a very mixed one. His biographers all speak of his great personal courage, and we hear of his love of reading, and his endowment of a Saxon school at Rome. He drew up a Code of Mercian Laws ("Offa's Code") which has unfortunately been lost. On the other hand William of Malmesbury calls him "a downright public pilferer," and says he took the lands of many churches. The basest deed attributed to him was the betrayal and murder of a guest under his own roof. Ethelbert, King of the East Angles,—East Anglia being one of the small portions of England outside the three

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

OFFA'S DYKE FROM THE FOSSE

(DYKE ON THE RIGHT, WITH TREES AND RAILING ON TOP)

great kingdoms,—wished to obtain the hand of Ethelthryth, Offa's daughter. With this end in view he set out for Mercia, and on reaching the border, sent letters before him announcing his approach. According to this story, Offa replied by a warm invitation, gave his guest a splendid reception, and then caused him to be assassinated while passing through a dark passage.[1]

William of Malmesbury,[2] in his Chronicle, endeavours to sum up the pros and cons regarding Offa's character, and evidently finds the problem a difficult one. After telling us that Offa was "a man of great mind, and one who endeavoured to bring to effect whatever he had preconceived," he continues "when I consider the deeds of this person I am doubtful whether I should commend or censure. At one time, in the same character, vices were so palliated by virtues, and at another virtues came in such quick succession upon vices that it is difficult to determine how to characterize the changing Proteus."

During his reign Offa raised Mercia to a position it had never before held. The extent of his power, and the greatness of the position he had won, are brought home to us most vividly by his relations with the Emperor Charlemagne. A letter from the Emperor has come down to us which amounts to a treaty with Offa. The following extracts serve to show the respect in which Offa was held by the ruler of Christendom in his day.

Charlemagne's letter to Offa.

"Charles, by the grace of God King of the Franks and

[1] See Lappenberg's *History of England under the Saxon Kings*.

[2] Born about 1095 or 1096, died 1143 or a few years later.

Lombards, and Patrician of the Romans, to his esteemed and dearest brother Offa, King of the Mercians, sendeth health:—First, we give thanks to God Almighty for the purity of the Catholic faith, which we find laudably expressed in your letters.

Concerning pilgrims, who for the love of God or for the salvation of their souls wish to visit the residence of the holy apostles, let them go peaceably without any molestation; but if persons not seeking the cause of religion, but that of gain, let them pay the customary tolls in proper places. We will, too, that traders have due protection within our Kingdom, according to our mandate, and if in any place they suffer wrongful oppression let them appeal to us or to our judges, and we will see full justice done. Let your kindness also be apprized that we have sent some token of our regard out of our dalmatics[1] and palls, to each episcopal see of your Kingdom, or of Ethelred's, as an almsgiving. . . . Moreover we have sent somewhat out of the treasure of those earthly riches which the Lord Jesus hath granted to us of his unmerited bounty, for the metropolitan cities, and for yourself a belt, an Hungarian sword, and two silk cloaks."[2]

It has been pointed out,[3] as a circumstance in favour of the genuineness of this letter, that in the early part of this same year (796) Charlemagne is known to have distributed many presents from the treasures taken from

[1] Dalmatic, a garment worn by clergy or princes.

[2] This letter is given in the Chronicles of Roger of Wendover and of William of Malmesbury.

[3] Lappenberg's *England under the Saxon Kings*.

the Huns. The Hungarian sword mentioned in the letter was probably one of these.

Subsequently a quarrel arose between the two rulers. Charlemagne demanded the hand of one of Offa's daughters for his son Charles. Offa would only agree on the condition that Charlemagne gave his beloved daughter Berhta to Offa's son Ecgfrith. At this point the Emperor seems to have considered that Offa's demands exceeded reasonable bounds, and the intermediaries had hard work to keep him from closing the French ports to English traders. According to some accounts this was actually done, and Offa retaliated by closing English ports. This seems to be borne out by a portion of a letter from Alcuin, quoted by William of Malmesbury. The fragment of the letter runs: "I know not what will be our destination, for some ground of difference, fomented by the devil, hath arisen between King Charles and King Offa, so that on both sides all navigation is prohibited the merchants. Some say that we are to be sent into these parts to treat of peace." This quarrel was eventually made up.

According to one account Offa followed up the construction of the Dyke by the immediate occupation of the Mercian march. "Offa drove the Welsh beyond the Dee and Wye, and filled with Saxons the plain and more level regions between those rivers and Severn."[1]

Thomas Churchyard, an Elizabethan writer, embodies in his *Worthiness of Wales* a tradition that the space between Offa's and Wat's Dykes was neutral ground. The verse is only worth quoting for its quaintness, and

[1] Langhorne's *Chronicon.*

for the mention of the two Dykes. As embodying historical fact it is quite worthless.

> "Within two myles there is a famous thing
> Cal'de Offaes Dyke, that reacheth farre in length:
> All kinds of ware the Danes might thether bring,
> It was free ground, and called the Britaine's strength.
> Wat's Dyke likewise about the same was set,
> Between which two both Danes and Britaines met,
> And traffick still, but passing bounds by sleight,
> The one did take the other prisoner streight."

The theory of neutrality is not borne out by other accounts, or by any facts of which we have records. And one asks oneself in bewilderment what the "Danes" are doing in that part of England, and at that time! Churchyard was evidently one of that interesting band of travellers in all ages, from Herodotus to the present day, who consider that a tour of a few weeks in a previously unknown country entitles the tourist to write its history.

Offa's Dyke as a geographical limit.

The objects for which the Dyke was built have been the subject of much discussion and speculation. That its primary purpose was that of a boundary between Mercia and Wales seems sufficiently clear. According to some early chroniclers it provided a landmark beyond which the two hostile peoples might not pass without the act being equivalent to a breach of the peace. "By the Mercian King Offa and by Egbert the monarch was a law made, by the instigation of his wife, that it should be present death for the Welsh to passe over the same [Offa's Dyke] as John Bever the monk of Westminster reporteth; and the like under Harold, as John of Salisbury writeth; wherein it was ordained that what Welshman soever should bee found

with any weapon on this side of that limit, which was Offa's Ditch, should have his right hand cut off by the King's officers." [1]

The relations of the people living on opposite sides of the Dyke were regulated by law. If a dweller on one side wished to travel on the other he had to put himself under an appointed guide as soon as he had crossed the Dyke and was on "foreign" soil. This guide met him at the boundary, conducted him to where he had to go, and was responsible for seeing him safely back again. The slayer of a man on the foreign side of the Dyke had to pay half his legal value to his next of kin, or other appointed person. This law was equal as between Welsh and English.[2]

It is one thing to make a boundary line, but quite another to keep two warlike races on opposite sides of it. When there was no pressing business requiring their attention elsewhere, one or other of the Saxon kings filled up his time pleasantly by "turning his attention to the Welsh"—to quote the delicate euphemism usually employed by the historian. This "attention" generally consisted in an attempt to annex a fresh portion of the Welshman's land. The Welsh, on their side, were more than willing to bear their part in this game of war. They usually waged it in the form of unexpected raids into Saxon territory, the sacking of any towns lying near the border, the slaughter of as many of their enemies as possible, and a rapid retreat with all the

[1] Speed's *Historie*.

[2] Every man, woman, and child had his or her legal value exactly set down in the ancient laws. See for this, and for laws relating to the Dyke, Thorpe's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales*.

booty and cattle they could "lift." The Dyke does not seem to have been an insuperable obstacle to these expeditions, even at first, and as time went on, the region on both sides of it—but more especially on the English side—became the regular battle-ground of the two peoples. Its history is strikingly like the history of the Scotch border. This debatable land became known as "The Marches of Wales," and in the history of century after century we read of "trouble on the Welsh border," or "risings in the Marches of Wales."

The boundaries and extent of these marches have been a source of much controversy in succeeding times. In the strictly legal sense of the term the Marches of Wales consisted of those portions of the country ruled by the Marcher Lordships, some of which were in the very heart of Wales. But in the ordinary and popular use of the phrase it denoted the Welsh and English border districts.

Roughly speaking, the Marches consisted of part, or the whole, of what now constitutes the Welsh and English border counties, but it is clear that the exact area included under the name varied very much at different periods.

A statute of the second year of Henry IV's reign throws some light on the question as regards that period. The Welsh under Owain Glyndwr had been giving trouble on the borders, and the statute enacted that "no Welshman should purchase lands or tenements within the towne of Chester, Salop, Bridgworth, Ludlow, Lempster, Hereford, Gloucester, Worcester, nor any other townes *joyning to the Marches of Wales.*"[1]

[1] Italics mine.

Photo by] [*Lettsome and Sons, Llangollen*

OFFA'S DYKE FROM THE TOP

(FOSSE ON THE LEFT)

From this we may conclude that at that time the Marches consisted of the present Welsh border counties. Selden, writing in 1618, says: "The particular bounds have been certain parts of Dee, Wye, Severn, and Offa's Dyke." It may be taken as established that the Welsh border counties continued to be included in the Marches, but it is a more difficult matter to say how much of the present *English* border counties were then included. That the boundaries changed from time to time is clear from the fact that Shrewsbury and Ludlow were spoken of in the statute of Henry IV, quoted above, as "townes joyning to the Marches of Wales," while Heylyn, chaplain to Charles I and II, speaks of Ludlow and Shrewsbury as two market towns "in the Marches."[1]

Offa's Dyke in Chirkland.

The portion of the Dyke which crosses Chirkland is a particularly fine one. In its course across Chirk Castle Park both vallum and fosse are very striking at the spot known as Adw'r Beddau, by Castle Mill. At this point the gap begins, and continues until the eastern boundary of Penisa'r Glyn is reached, on the opposite side of the valley. Here the Dyke begins again, passing across the hill by the spot locally called "Gibraltar," where a road has been cut through it. In the two fields above this point the Dyke may be seen at its finest. Fifteen feet has been given as its greatest height at the present day,[2] but there is more than one place, in its passage across

[1] For extracts from early writers bearing on the extent of the Marches, see an article by Sir G. F. Duckett in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, Fourth Series, vol. xii, p. 137.

[2] *Earthwork of England*, by A. Hadrian Allcroft, p. 497.

this hill, where it reaches at least twenty feet. To stand on the top of the Dyke, at one of these points, is to realize how imposing a barrier it must have been, in the days when the depth of the fosse had not been reduced by the accumulated debris of eleven centuries.

THE END

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